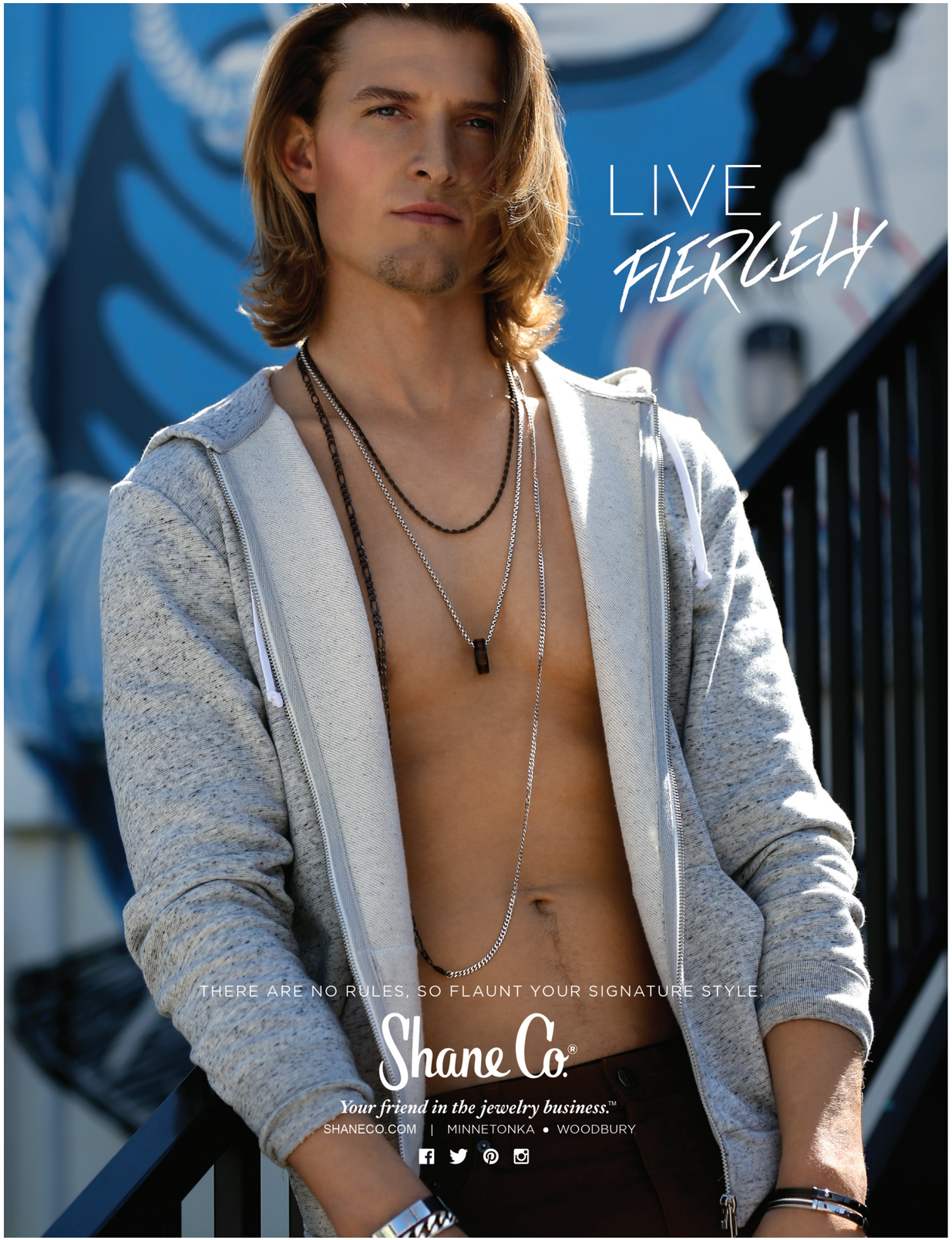


LAVENDER Volume 22, Issue 549

2016 LAVENDER PRIDE ISSUE: Living Pride

June 9-22, 2016

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Photo by Hubert Bonnet

ON THE COVER
Twin Cities Pride presents Kathy Griffin to launch us — laughing — into Pride Weekend. Read about her and much more in this 2016 Pride Issue.
Photo courtesy of Kathy Griffin

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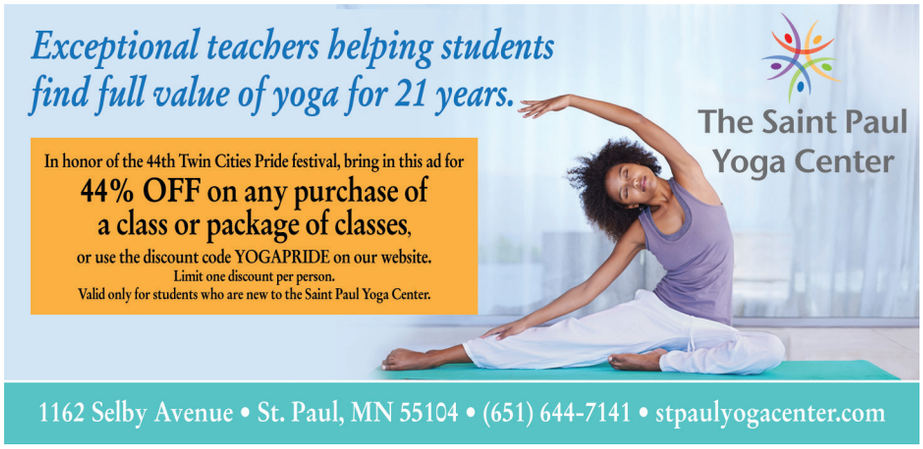
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PRIDE
2016

FROM THE EDITOR
- by Andy Lien -

Living Pride

Happy Pride, friends. It's the month of the year that is set aside for this community, with a special culmination of festivals and parades and events that makes it different from the rest of the year. There is an air of "official" about it. It belongs to people who belong to each other because of being gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, two-spirit, and all of the allies of these people, as well as all the gradients found within those colors of the rainbow. It's a group that has membership based on opting-in.

Because what makes this community a distinct group isn't the baseline norm for this world, at some point in everyone's life, each person has had to say, "Yes." It's a positive, not a negative. And that is a remarkably strong trait of a group; it takes claiming and owning it rather than simply inheriting it like being from a certain ethnicity or having a particular skin color or even growing up in a religion where you just wake up and walk the path that was already determined for you. Members of this group have to consciously say, "I am this. I belong here." And during the month of Pride, we also say, "I will celebrate us." Being who you are isn't a choice, but coming out and being a member of this group is. And it's a path that is diverse; one that's still being determined and fought for, as laws and hearts and minds expand to include this group, which is reason for more unity and, usually, more celebration.

Lavender's Pride Issue is a celebration of this community as well as a snapshot of how this community lives its pride in everyday life. We've got a section about the upcoming Pride festival and what will be happening later in June as part of Twin Cities Pride, and we also have the largest issue of our year, full of what people in this community are doing, what we care about, what is on our radar as a group with special interests. It's a publication in which you can see yourself, someone you know, as well as someone who's doing something you're interested in. We profile members of the community who are in television, music, food, sports, fashion, the performing arts, and nonprofits as well as topics that involve this community like no other: having babies, being healthy, going into recovery, getting married, and going to school with support and respect. It's how this community lives. With pride. Not just in the month of June, but all year 'round.

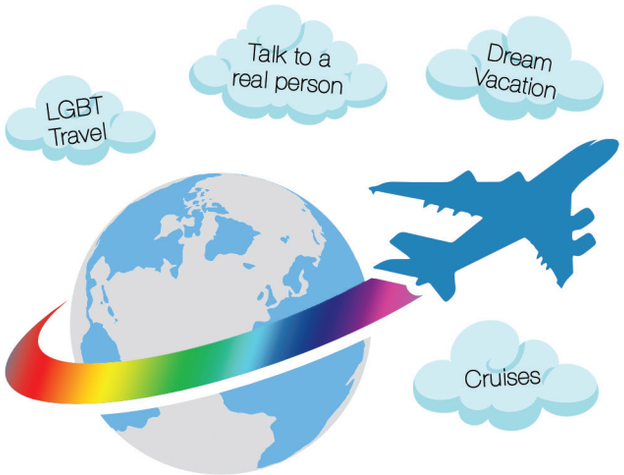
This Pride season, I wish you exactly what I wish you the rest of the year: a life of authenticity, safety, celebration, health, recognition, and belonging. You are seen, you belong, you are valued.

With you and with thanks,
Andy





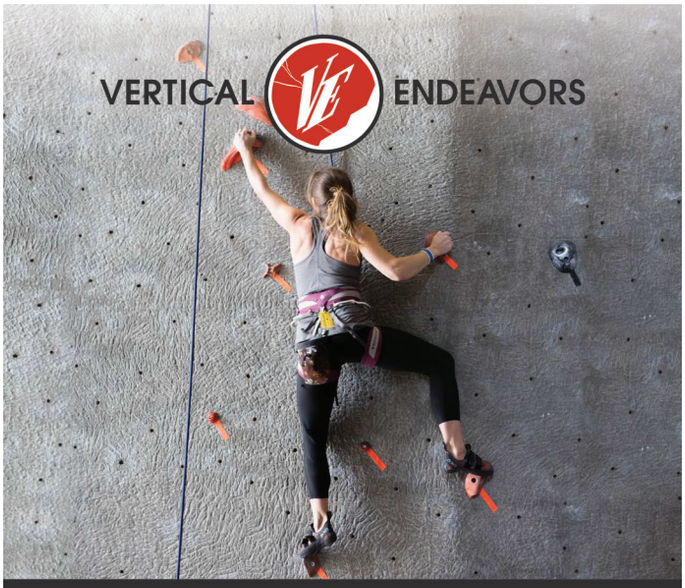
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A WORD IN EDGEWISE
- by E.B. Boatner -

Keep Reinventing that Wheel

Trouble in Mind recently closed its triumphant run at the Guthrie. Splendidly acted and directed, Alice Childress' 1955 drama centers around a young, white director (John Catron) rehearsing a mostly black cast of actors through the clichéd Southern drama, *Chaos in Belleville*.

The cast, even the stage veterans Wiletta Mayer and Sheldon Forrester (played by Margo Moorer and Cleavant Derricks) are resigned to their stereotyped bits, Wiletta mumbling her "Yes'm"s, Sheldon whittlin' a stick, until Wiletta is directed to "look inside" herself for motivation. Thus turns the course and tenor of both plays. Wiletta realizes her character, a sharecropper mother, would never turn her hunted son in for his "safety." After this epiphany, although desperate for her first Broadway part, Wiletta balks, unable to utter her blatantly false lines. She refuses to go on, at least at curtainfall.

I'd like to be able to say that *Trouble*, for all its power, was simply an interesting, dated piece. But it's not, other than that it was written over half a century ago. Blacks voting? Yes, but many whites are working today to keep blacks (and others they deem undesirable) from voting this November. Childress herself? Her work? Born black in 1916 (or '20), how unremarkable is it that she is not better known or represented? Suppose the white authors of the hackneyed *Chaos in Belleville* had penned *Trouble in Mind*?

Race hierarchy is still set fast. As we look to this year's Pride celebrations, we'd do well to remember that for all the strides made for various letters of the rainbow alphabet, equality — and safety — are not uniformly assured.

The great Trans Bathroom Wars are being promulgated not only as a smokescreen for greater problems, but, I cannot help but believe, to mask ill-treatment of all GLBTs, lesbians in particular. Do haters suddenly and honestly believe every young woman in a pixie cut in the ladies' loo is transgender and intent on rape? I'll wager haters now see a free pass to harass perceived lesbians, and I'll double that by betting they wouldn't recognize most transgender individuals *anywhere*.

Celebrate this June, but consider that there is much more to come before it's over; ask those who've lived through the 61 years since *Trouble in Mind* debuted.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I Don't Support "Sick Paid Leave" and that Doesn't Make Me a Terrible Boss

A good boss takes care of a good employee. See the word "good" in front of each title? For over 41 years my family business has employed hundreds of neighborhood people. During that time we have cosigned car loans, lent money, given cash bonuses, given earned pay raises, free food, the countless free beers, time off when needed, understood when an emergency happens, allowed an employee's child to "hang out" until child care arrived, given out gift cards as thanks, allowed my own car to be used when a driver's was in the shop, and even had an employee and his children stay at my home for over a month while leaving an abusive relationship. I work alongside my employees. I'm not in an office, I don't stop by and check in.

I knew what I was getting into when I bought the business. My last day off was over three years ago (for surgery). My last car was 13 years old. When I'm not in the restaurant I'm doing errands for the business, doing never ending bookwork, and fielding text messages about issues that come up when I'm not there. Again, I knew what I was getting into when I bought the business. I believe most people that work in the restaurant world know what they are getting into also. Most employees can make their own schedules, can swap shifts when needed, and get time off. We expect our employees to get their shifts covered and help each other out. Upon hiring they are told that we understand when people get sick but we expect some common sense. Feeling sick the night before? Call fellow employees and get stuff traded. I don't have patience for an employee that complains about not feeling well when their Facebook page shows them out all night. Make choices in your personal life that won't interfere with your work life, instead of the other way around. I understand not all people are like that and there are those with sick kids, but in all the years we have been around, those people are in the minority.

I have staff that CHOOSE to only work a couple days a week, am I really responsible to make sure they have paid time off? My employees go on vacation, take days off, go out to dinner, etc., without me having to supplement their income. I also offer Aflac where they can purchase "emergency" insurance for less than a pitcher of beer (only 1 of 17 employees chooses to do so). I am a good boss, I know I treat my employees more than fair. Some public comments that are for "Sick Paid Leave" say that we can't run the business without employees and should treat them better. Do they think we don't know that? But, are they remembering that the employees need us also? They need us taking all the risk, putting our names on the dotted line, and not being able to be a "no call no show." A good boss takes care of a good employee.

I can't afford to pay someone that isn't there. On average, this would cost me over $600.00 per month. Margins are tight in this business and right now I run at 34% labor cost. National average is 30-35%. If I'm forced to pay Sick Time, not only does labor go up, but payroll taxes do also. The government wants more out of my already nearly empty pockets and into theirs. Minneapolis, come up with a better plan that doesn't hurt small businesses so much! More should be expected of the employee, not the employer. Raise the number of employees you must have, raise the amount of hours the employee must work to even qualify for this, and get rid of the employer having to keep a tally (this isn't your preschool star chart, keep your stubs!).

I am a good boss and I don't need the City of Minneapolis trying to tell me how to be a better one.

(Don't even get me started on the proposed $15.00 minimum wage.)

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- Photos by Sophia Hantzes -

Lavender's First Thursday at the West End – May 4, 2016


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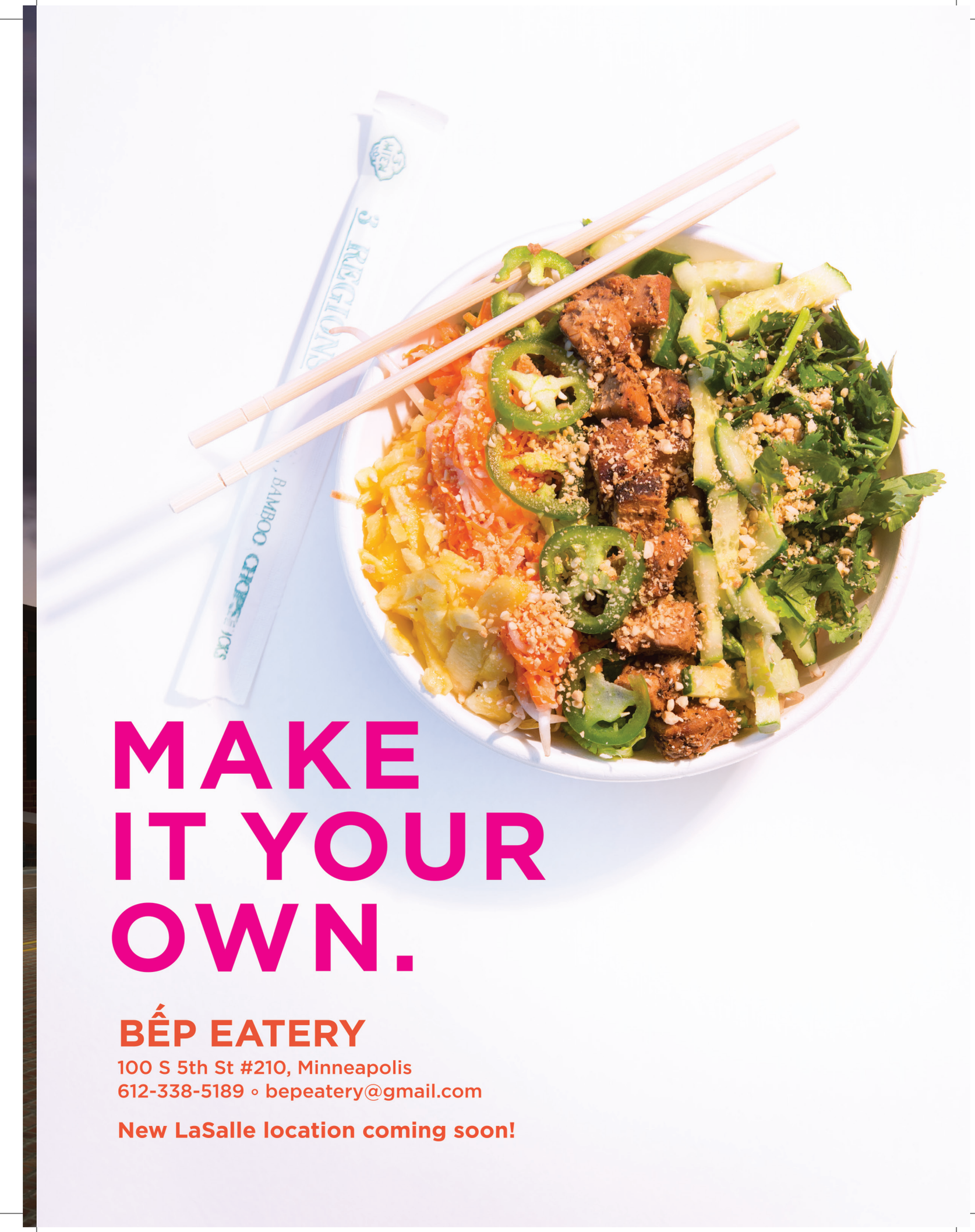
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OUR PRIDE
- by Lindsi Gish -

Meet the 2016 Twin Cities Pride Grand Marshals

Please join us in celebrating the following individuals for their exceptional, transformational contributions to our community. Each year, Twin Cities Pride recognizes individuals who've had a compelling, lasting, and transformational impact on the local GLBTQ community. Here are the Grand Marshals for 2016:

Roxanne Anderson

Nominated by: Quinn Villagomez
Roxanne Anderson is a community activist who has been working for social justice in the GLBTQ community for 20-plus years. Their list of accomplishments and involvement is extensive, but here are just a few that make them prime Grand Marshal material:

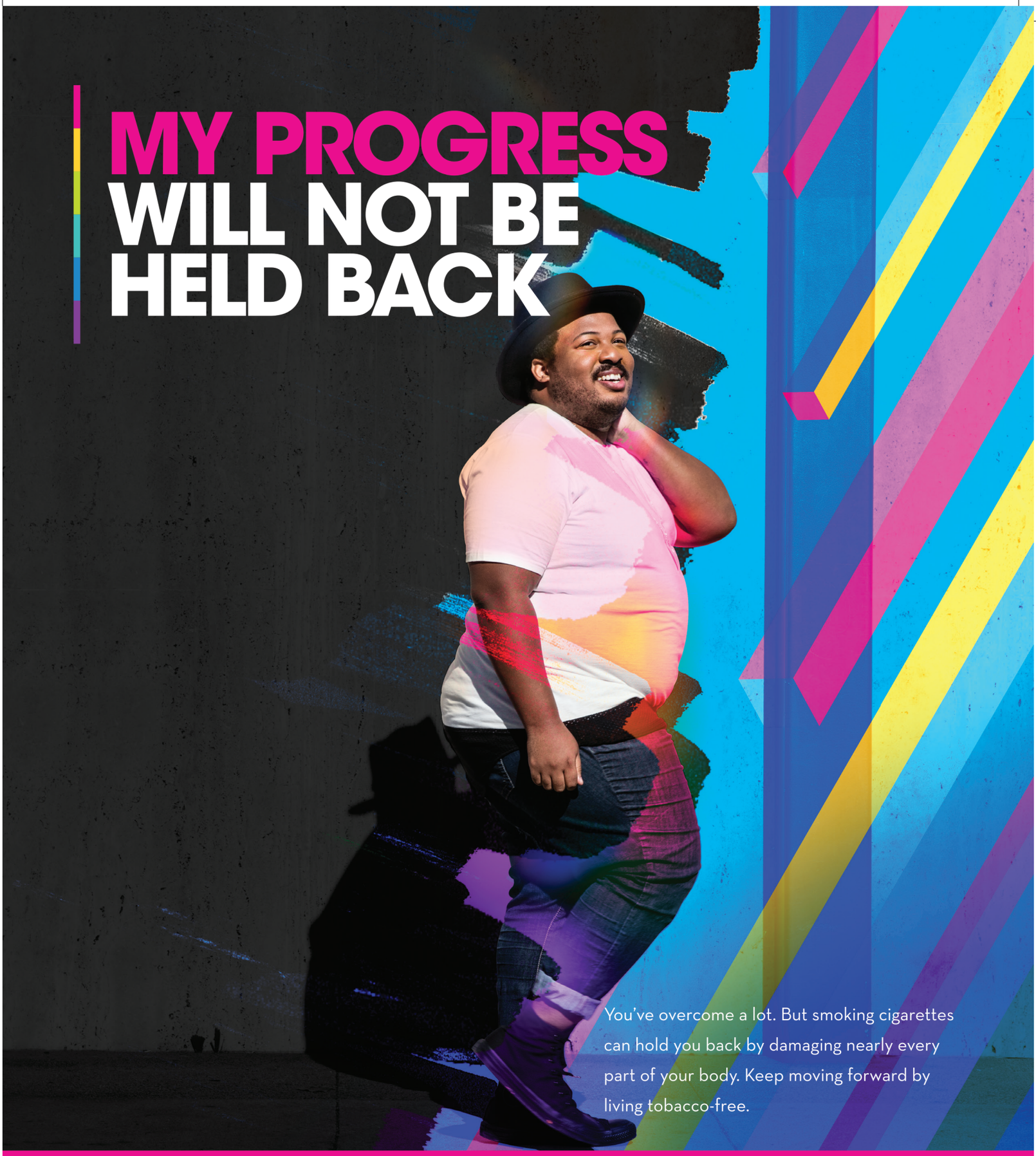
- Trans and Racial Justice Director for Outfront MN
- Volunteer Director for the Minnesota Transgender Health Coalition
- CEO/Founder of RARE Productions
- Co-owner of Cafe SouthSide in South Minneapolis

They are passionate about the rights of QPOC/Transgender POC, and strive to make sure QPOC/TPOC are represented and respected as human beings and not looked at for gender identity alone. Thanks, Roxanne, for your tremendous contributions and tireless work to make our community a more just and accepting place.



PHOTO BY ANNA MIN OF MIN ENTERPRISES PHOTOGRAPHY

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32



This Free Life

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FDA

D Rojas



PHOTO BY REBECCA JEAN LAWRENCE PHOTOGRAPHY

Nominated by: Janell Sill

D Rojas demonstrates leadership skills in oh-so-many ways. Whether she's escorting the mayor in the Pride parade on her motorcycle or leading a Dykes on Bikes adventure, D has gone above and beyond to be an inclusive ambassador of the GLTBQ motorcyclist community for the last 20-plus years.

As the president of Dykes on Bikes Minneapolis, she helps make the Pride parade the best ride of the year for the group. But it's more than just motorcycles for D; it's about friendship and community-building. It's not unusual for women she doesn't know to approach her, give her a hug, and thank her for helping at a time when they needed it the most.

On top of everything else, D's presence is open and welcoming; meet her once, and you'll remember forever. Thanks, D, for your positive spirit, your warmth, and all of the time and energy you put into making the community better.


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OUR PRIDE
- by Mo Perry -

Volunteer Spotlight: Kurt Wiger

The subject of our Volunteer Spotlight is no stranger to the dedication and heart required of volunteers. As the coordinator of volunteers and interns for Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute, a committee member on the University of St. Thomas' Forum on Workplace Inclusion for the past decade, and a member of the board of directors for Twin Cities Pride, Kurt Wiger is drawn to meaningful work that truly makes a difference in the world. Here is his story, in his own words.

For the past 11 years, I've worked in volunteer management within healthcare, and last year I was at a point where I wanted to meet new people, get out, and be more involved with life. I wanted to do something that had impact and allowed me to be creative, but I didn't really know what that would be. The position to be a member of the board of directors for TC Pride came up on my LinkedIn page, and I immediately sent in my résumé.

I have a real passion for Pride. I've been out since my late 20s, and I have two brothers who are gay. I still have my button from 1991, the first Twin Cities Pride parade I marched in. So when I saw that position pop up on LinkedIn, I knew that's what I wanted to do. I was elected in February 2015 and jumped right in.

The thing I've learned the most since joining the board is what an incredible group of people I have the opportunity to work with at Pride. We have a very dedicated group of volunteers who I've gotten to know, work with, and respect. The board of directors works with a large team of volunteers who manage the overall operations, entertainment, organizing the food, vendors, security, parade logistics, everything that happens.



PHOTO COURTESY OF TWIN CITIES PRIDE

Last year I went down to Loring Park during setup and Naj Sengbloh, who manages the entertainment, took me around in the golf cart. I got to watch how this team of people, who have so much knowledge, set it all up. It was so much fun. People were saying, "Board members don't usually come to setup," and I said, "Well, this one does!" My feeling is that If I understand what they're doing, I'll be able to manage it better.

Last year's Pride was exhilarating with the timing of the SCOTUS ruling on same-sex marriage. But we realize there's a lot more work to do, especially for people of color and the trans members of our community. We're really focused on the question of how we keep moving forward and continue to create an awareness that educates. We're the third largest Pride in the country, but we're focusing on how we grow and continue to support our community. Part of Pride's mission is to commemorate our diverse heritage. That's what I want to work on: creating an inclusive environment within the LGBTQ community that supports each other and the larger community of the Twin Cities.

We're working on getting more businesses and corporations on board. Last year I started talking to the Minnesota Twins about collaboration. They have an annual diversity networking event at Target Field, and this year it's focused on LGBT issues and inclusivity for the first time. Billy Bean [Major League Baseball's first Ambassador for Inclusion, who came out after retiring from the San Diego Padres in 1999] will be here for that. That collaboration feels like a real success to me.

This is also the first year that Pride will be a corporate partner of the Saint Paul Saints. Pride is kicking off with a game at CHS Field. It's the first time an LGBT organization has partnered with a major or minor league baseball team. General Mills, Target, Best Buy, and many other organizations are also on board with the celebration. This is how we further our mission to celebrate and educate. The annual Pride festival is a great opportunity for all of us to celebrate in the richness of the LGBTQ community, but it's also our largest fundraising event that helps us support initiatives throughout the year that support the LGBTQ communities.

I've been surprised by the advocacy role that I'm taking on. I started my professional life as a teacher, and I'm very into educating people. I just like getting people to come together and have the hard conversations. We have to have the hard conversations, even within our own communities. We still have our own challenges around integrating our community. There's so much for all of us to learn and carry forward.

The other thing that's really fun is that Pride is so multigenerational. When the entertainment for this year's festival was announced, some of the millennials were like, "Who are the Pointer Sisters?" and I was like, "Oh, let me tell you!" As I meet the generations behind me and feel such wonder and pride as they're walking down the street holding hands, I'm reminded that we all have a responsibility to the generations who will follow us. All you need to do is live open, out and proud, with respect for each other.

Volunteering for me is the opportunity to really make a difference. Creating spaces where everybody can come together and have a conversation, where everyone is respected — that's what I'm passionate about. I'm an introvert, but I feel I'm on a path to having a broader voice, and I want to give it to Pride. I can't say enough about the incredible team I work with; none of us can do this alone.

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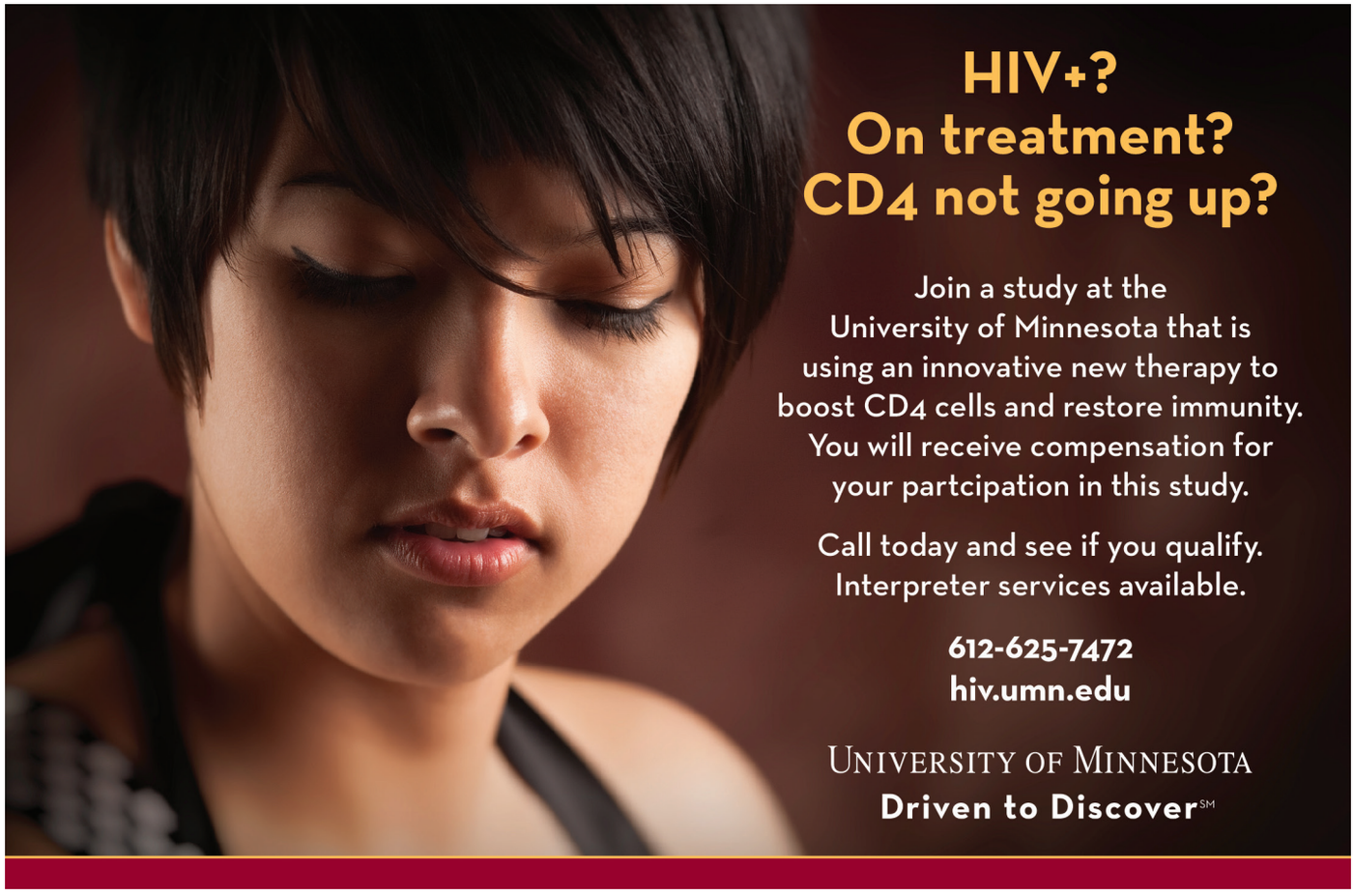
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OUR PRIDE

- by Lindsi Gish -

Featured Artist: Frenchie Davis



An R&B powerhouse, Frenchie Davis has had a successful music career with appearances on *American Idol*, *The Voice*, and several Broadway productions. As an openly bisexual woman of color, she has also successfully helped foster a healthy dialogue about homophobia and intersectionality.

That's why it's fitting for Frenchie to be performing on the Power to the People stage at this year's Pride. Her fierceness, talent and authenticity are just a few reasons we think you should mark your calendar ASAP for this show: Sunday, June 26 at 4 p.m. Don't miss it!

For a full list of Pride entertainment, go to tcpride.org.

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OUR PRIDE
- by Mo Perry -

Living History Project Kicking Off at Pride Festival

Dot Belstler's first Pride was in 2009. She had been invited to volunteer at the festival in Loring Park and, wanting to educate herself about the history of Pride and the GLBT community, she found herself in the GLBT History Pavilion, poring over panels from the University of Minnesota's Tretter collection that detailed the community's historical context. "I spent two hours in that pavilion, reading and crying. It was really emotional, but I stuck with it and read every one of the panels," says Belstler. "I was so engrossed and impressed, and that's what made me think, 'I want to work with this organization.'" She became the executive director of Twin Cities Pride later that year.

This year, the pavilion's display will take an even deeper dive into the fraught and formative early days of the GLBT civil rights movement. The Minnesota State Arts Board provided Twin Cities Pride with a grant to produce Living History, a new oral history project that aims to capture stories from the people who experienced and shaped the history of the GLBT movement in Minnesota. Twin Cities Pride will work in conjunction with Twin Cities Public Television (TPT), which is working on a Minnesota queer history documentary of its own, to create a series of three-to-five-minute video snippets featuring individuals who have been on the front lines of the evolving GLBT movement in Minnesota.

One of the first people they plan to interview is Jean-Nickolaus Tretter. In 1972, Tretter and his friends organized a commemoration of the Stonewall Riots in the Twin Cities, a celebration that evolved over 40 years to become one of the largest Pride festivals in the country. In the early '70s, Tretter also began collecting gay and lesbian materials, which eventually grew to represent the state's largest library of GLBT historical materials. The Tretter Collection is now housed at the University of Minnesota and displayed, in part, in the pavilion at Loring Park every year during Pride, where it will be augmented this year by the first of the recorded video segments.

Belstler is hoping that the Pride festival will also serve as a fertile gathering ground to capture stories from attendees. While the exact location is yet to be determined, a private recording booth will be set up at the park, and people will be invited to come inside and share stories of their first experience at Pride. The hope is that Living History will grow into a long-term project that Twin Cities Pride can feature on its website, bring to schools, and use to contribute to our collective knowledge and understanding of the many faces and facets of GLBT history.

"We have the opportunity to capture these stories and share them more broadly," says Belstler.

And as Jean-Nickolaus Tretter is quoted as saying on the University of Minnesota's Tretter Collection website: "It's important we create a historical legacy to pass along to future generations. It's how the Jews endured thousands of years of persecution, because they had a tradition and a history. We have the opportunity to give gays and lesbians of the future something similar to hold on to."



PHOTO COURTESY OF TWIN CITIES PRIDE

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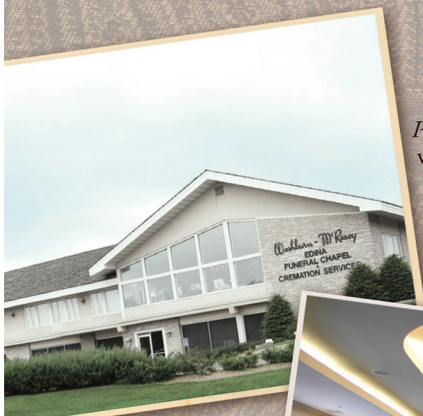
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OUR PRIDE
- by Mo Perry -

Celebrating 15 years of P2P stage at Pride

In 2000, Roxanne Anderson was working the Minnesota Men of Color (MMOC) table at Pride. One of the main stages was nearby, and the music for the drag performances echoed around the table. A young trans woman who had just been performing on the stage approached, clearly upset.





PHOTOS BY ANNE HODSON

She said her song had been interrupted prematurely, and she had been asked to leave the stage. "The MC didn't get her and didn't get what her performance was about," says Anderson. "And this young trans woman of color kind of demanded that MMOC do something about it. We brainstormed with her and brought it back to the office, where we brainstormed with a larger group of folks. And the Power to the People (P2P) stage was born out of that."

Roxanne Anderson, who uses the pronouns "they," "them," and "their," is the trans and racial justice director for Outfront Minnesota and has been working as an activist and community organizer for decades. They say the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 44



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P2P stage, described by *Lavender* magazine in 2014 as "a multicultural experience featuring spoken word, hip-hop, and rap," came out of a desire to create a space where people of color could find each other and see themselves represented, and where social service organizations could intersect with the communities of color they were trying to reach.

In the area's inaugural year in 2001, more than 15 artists performed on the P2P stage and 23 different cultural and social service organizations were represented. "Before, if you were an LGBT person of color walking around the Pride festival, every 3–5 minutes you might pass another person of color and give that little nod of recognition," says Anderson. "The P2P stage gave us a place to meet together as black, Native, Asian, and Latina/o folks, and see our cultures and identities represented and celebrated."

In the early days, it was difficult to gain support for the vision of the P2P stage. "We really started as a grassroots band of rabble rousers," says Anderson. "People questioned why the area was needed." Anderson points to the crucial role played by MMOC Founder Nick Metcalf. "It was his guidance and his ability to network with organizations that made it happen. It wasn't super easy to go into a room of folks we didn't know, say that people of color need something different, and convince them to give us the opportunity to make that happen." In those early years, MMOC and the agencies that supported them did the heavy lifting, figuratively and literally, hauling the sound equipment and assembling the stage themselves, with financial support from a modest PFund Foundation grant.

"When Cheryl Maloney became executive director of Pride [in 2006], she really saw what the P2P area was doing for the community and the agencies tabling there," says Anderson. Maloney started to grow the area through sponsorships, which facilitated P2P becoming a main performance stage at Pride and helped fly in some bigger-name stars that made the stage a destination for attendees. "Now we had people lining up throughout the park to come into the tent," says Anderson.

"IT'S BEEN PHENOMENAL. WE'VE BEEN ABLE TO INTEGRATE ITS LOCATION INTO THE PARK MORE, AND IT GROWS AND GROWS."

And while entertainment, celebration, and representation were always key components of the P2P stage, facilitating access to social service organizations that work with communities of color was just as important. "Art is a way communities of color often engage people around topics that might not be that fun," Anderson explains. "How do you get people into a room to talk about HIV? Well, you put a big star in that room."

In 2011 Anderson founded RARE Productions, a GLBTQ arts and entertainment media company, which has produced the entertainment at the P2P stage for the past five years. The 2016 Pride festival will be the final time RARE manages the stage, as Anderson is eager to give other people the chance to express themselves through the venue. "It's always good to pass the baton," says Anderson, "and, after 15 years, other people are interested."

Current executive director of Twin Cities Pride Dot Belstler talks with great appreciation of how the P2P stage has grown to become one of the most excellent performance spaces at the festival. "It's been phenomenal. We've been able to integrate its location into the park more, and it grows and grows. I appreciate all the work Roxanne and the team have put in over the years and look forward to seeing what it will become in the future."



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OUR PRIDE
- by Lindsi Gish -

Pride Beer Dabbler Turns Five

The Pride Beer Dabbler is back and better than ever, celebrating five years of drinking craft beer in support of our GLBTQ community! This year's theme focuses on celebrating and honoring icons and advocates of the community, recognizing their role in bringing awareness and progress to critical issues like marriage equality and transphobia.







PHOTOS BY DANIEL MURPHY

"We're honored and excited to once again participate in the Twin Cities Pride celebration and to show our support for the GLBTQ community. There is much to celebrate in the progress that has been made over the past five years, but there's still a ways to go, especially with regard to inequity and discrimination many transgender people face in our society today," said Kevin Stocks, events coordinator at The Beer Dabbler and *The Growler* magazine.

In this spirit of celebration, the more than 50 attending breweries will feature a special beer creation in honor of one iconic figure. Harvey Milk Stout, anyone?

MUSIC AND DANCE

The Prairie Fire Ladies Choir will kick off the evening with some of your favorite pop and rock covers. Hip-hop artist BdotCroc will follow, and Apollo Cobra will close the night with their huge beats and explosive dance party. The silent disco is also back, so put on your wireless headphones and bust out those sweet disco moves.

FOOD

10 food trucks will be on site…Tiki Tim's, Gastrotruck, Hot Indian Foods, Potter's Pasties, and more!

WHERE AND WHEN

Friday, June 24, 5:30 p.m.–9:30 p.m. Loring Park
A portion of proceeds from the event benefit Twin Cities Pride.

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OUR PRIDE

- by Shane Lueck -

KATHY WITH THE GOOD HAIR

As the center of controversy and someone unafraid to cross the line, say what you will about Kathy Griffin, but she's also in a league of her own. She's half an EGOT, for goodness sake! She has two Emmy awards, and she's one of the only three female comedians to have won a Grammy for Best Comedy Album, an honor shared by Lily Tomlin and Whoopi Goldberg. Her 23 comedy standup TV specials earned her a mention in the Guinness Book of Records. In sum, she's a bigger deal than you may think. She had three lines in *Pulp Fiction*, starred in Eminem's video "The Real Slim Shady," and, of course, in two episodes of *Seinfeld* ("That's how the straight guys know me," she says), in addition to her hit reality-TV show, *My Life on the D List*.

In her latest standup tour, *Like a Boss*, Griffin pokes fun at a new generation of celebrities, without neglecting her favorite material, such as her own alcoholic mom. There's just no holding back with Griffin, who's stepping up as the spiritual heiress of her departed friend and mentor, Joan Rivers. Like Rivers, Griffin is determined to keep PC culture at bay, and nobody is safe.

Not even me. Before we even speak, Griffin finds me on Twitter to let me know she's looking forward to our interview. The woman certainly does her research, at one point even mentioning, "I'm reading your Twitter and you have the cutest dog." (She's not wrong.) But before we even began talking, she builds on the repartee we started when we spoke before her last appear-



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATHY GRIFFIN

ance in Minnesota. She immediately shows me that she has familiarized herself with me and began our conversation by catering exactly to the kind of information I would want to know.

"I have some news for you, Shane," she said with a wink in her voice. "And you should know this is breaking news, but I'm giving it to you exclusively. Since we've spoken last, I can now reveal I'm Becky with the good hair."

"Now, I will admit, I'm only Becky with the good hair when I get a good gay man to give me a really good blowout, then I turn into Becky with the good hair, other than that, I'm just Kathy Griffin with the curly hair," she continues, referencing the already iconic line from Beyoncé's *Lemonade*. "I just want to be clear there are times where I'm Becky with the good hair. And I had to ask my gay assistant what that means, he said, 'You don't want to be a Becky, it's a side chick.' I've been worse. I've been called worse and I've been treated worse. I even like the good hair part of it."

All jokes aside, Griffin promises all new material for her Pride kick-off appearance at Orchestra Hall. "I'm doing 80 shows this year alone," she says. "That's 80 cities. I fly more than a pilot. And I love doing new material. And I can't even avoid doing new material; let me tell you why. I just recently had run-ins with everyone from Leonardo DiCaprio and I was with Lily Tomlin (who played Orchestra Hall last year for Pride, so she can vouch for me) and I've seen Kris Jenner recently."



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATHY GRIFFIN

"FOR TWO HOURS YOU'RE GOING TO SIT PRIM AND PROPER IN ORCHESTRA HALL AND LISTEN TO MY DICK JOKES."

This is the point in the conversation where Griffin takes an uncharacteristically long pause. The term "Chatty Kathy" may well have been coined in her honor, so getting silence from her is a bit unnerving.

She continues, "Let's cut the shit, I've been immersed in the community since you people were merely called gay. Now that you're LGBTQIA2 (345Caitlyn), even I have to admit, Kris has had a rough year, like, give it up. Come on. She's had to act like Lamar overdosing in a whore house and then coming back onto their private jet is like a fun thing. I personally would be like, 'I'm sorry Lamar, you can't come on the private jet yet, you have to kind of work your way back into the family.' So, I mean, I can guarantee it's new material, because if you've ever seen me, I'm just talking shit about the Kardashians for two hours solid and now I actually have some empathy for Kris Jenner. Which I never thought I would say."

Aside from (maybe) going easy on Kris Jenner this time around, she will also be bringing a Cher story (this is Pride, after all), and Griffin won't hold back with regard to behind-the-scenes stories with Anderson Cooper. Of course, the ever-political Griffin promises that the presidential election will get discussed at Orchestra Hall, calling it the "biggest *Punk'd* Ashton Kutcher prank on the country in its history."

"And you know what? If I have to use humor, then I will use humor," she says, citing her funny bone as her political tactic. "But I'm really excited to stand on the stage at Orchestra Hall and be inappropriate. Because, you know, I love playing Minneapolis, and I'm a Midwestern gal from Chicago myself so I get the sensibility, I get it. I get the whole vibe there. And I'm gonna crack the whip on you LGBTs because god only knows what party you will have come from and what party you're dressed for, but dammit, for two hours you're going to sit prim and proper in Orchestra Hall and listen to my dick jokes."

Let there be no doubt about it, Griffin will be talking about whatever pops into her head or is in headlines that day. Just during our conversation alone, she made fun of Anderson Cooper for admitting he likes Nick Jonas on New Year's Eve, Nick Jonas for not knowing who The Monkees were when she met him, and Ryan Seacrest (always Ryan Seacrest).

"I am going to be talking about whatever is on top of my mind," she reassured me. "And also, who knows, what has been happening in the community? I'll be on stage at 8 p.m., and I'll be checking my iPad or phone just up until 5 to 8 to see what is going on locally. Every show is different. Minneapolis is always a hotbed of activity for politics and LGBT rights."

In discussing what to expect at her show, there inevitably comes a time when Griffin does research and flips the script. Without warning, Griffin suddenly becomes the interviewer to gain fodder for her performance. Out of nowhere, Griffin stops mid-sentence before saying, "Let me ask you this: do gay boys want Brad Pitt any more or is he too old now?"

As I fill her in on how there is a crowd of younger gay men who enjoy the older crowd, she responds with a laugh, "You are vicious! All right, so tell me who you want now. I'm actually writing this down for my show." Not expecting the question, I get visibly flustered, which spawns a conversation on her inability to control what comes out of her mouth and remaining politically correct.

"I just feel really strongly that comedians are in a way the last bastion of people that need to be politically incorrect. If you were to give me an assignment that said: 'OK, you have to do two hours of material and everything has to be politically correct,' I would have to leave," she says. "I was actually able to meet Prince Charles one time, and I was nervous meeting him of course, and my friend introduced us. She said, 'This is Kathy Griffin, she's an American comedian and she's very outrageous,' and Prince Charles pulled me in and he said, 'Well who would keep us honest if it weren't for newspeople and comedians?' I was like, that's right! I'm gonna try to do that because the Prince of Wales told me."

Her ability to say whatever she wants while remaining charming is certainly her trademark. Now, if she could find a way to bottle that, she would be well on her way to accomplishing her goal of becoming a brand. Whether the idea came from Kim Kardashian or her conversations with *Adweek*, Griffin has been vocal as of late about becoming a brand as her next career move.

"I'm so tired of being a human," she says without batting an eye. "I want to be a brand or an emoji. Or an app. I think if you're an app, you're actually making more money than a human. I talk to my comedy friends who are like, 'Fuck your two Emmys and Grammy, what are you doing going town to town with your dick jokes? You should just be an app.' And I can't help it. I love it. Because nothing, nothing can replicate the live experience. Especially during Pride at Orchestra Hall. Like, come on, that's as good as it gets."

Pride. The event that Griffin was born to play. And, being Pride, Griffin says she is going to "gay it up." As a guarantee, Griffin says audience members will laugh until they're choking a little bit because everything she's said is very inappropriate.

"I'm going to say things I can't even say on HBO or Netflix," she promises. "The live shows, I'm getting a little bit worse. I just want to say, as I get older, like, give me a dollar and I still won't buy a fuck. I'm having more fun, because I give less of a fuck." P

Orchestra Hall welcomes Kathy Griffin June 23. For tickets, head to www.minnesotaorchestra.org.



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LEATHER LIFE
- by Steve Lenius -

Plenty To Be Proud Of

It's Pride season. And this year, in spite of the current political ugliness (which will probably continue through November), I am finding plenty to be proud of. For example:

Recently, a new documentary film called *How Love Won: The Fight for Marriage Equality in Minnesota* received its world premiere at the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Film Festival. The film, which splendidly recounts how Minnesota first voted down a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage and then made marriage equality the law, was voted the festival's Audience Choice Award for Best Minnesota-Made Documentary Feature. The film was created by Michael McIntee and local news organization The UpTake.



PROUD MEMORIES: "VOTE NO" LAWN SIGNS IN 2012. PHOTO BY STEVE LENIUS



"THINK KINK": THE MINNESOTA LEATHER PRIDE DOG TAG FOR 2016. PHOTO BY ANDREW BERTKE

I remember feeling proud when, only four years ago, in the same year as our most recent U.S. presidential election, the "Vote No" campaign spearheaded by Minnesotans United for All Families succeeded in defeating the Minnesota marriage amendment.

I remember feeling proud when, only three years ago, the Minnesota legislature passed marriage equality in Minnesota.

And I remember feeling proud when, only one year ago on June 26, 2015, marriage equality became a reality for all 50 states, courtesy of the Supreme Court of the United States.

As I watched *How Love Won*, I felt proud all over again of the progress we have made in a relatively short time. I invite you to watch this film and see if you don't laugh, cry, and feel a renewed sense of pride in our community, our neighbors, our allies, and our state. I haven't heard if any showings have been scheduled during Pride this year, but visit the film's website (www.howlovewon.com) and sign up to receive information on future showings. You want to see this movie.

And now, from marriage to bathrooms. In April, Governor Mark Dayton forbade state employees to travel to North Carolina for non-essential business. This was in reaction to North Carolina's "bathroom bill," which prohibits transgender people from using public bathrooms that don't match their birth sex. Governor Dayton also said he would veto any attempt to pass a similar law in Minnesota. For these and many other reasons, I'm proud of my state's governor.

And I'm also proud of President Obama and his administration for taking a stand on this issue. At a press conference on May 9, 2016, U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch spoke directly to the transgender community when she said, "The Department of Justice and the entire Obama administration wants you to know that we see you; we stand with you; and we will do everything we can to protect you going forward."

Yes, so much to be proud of. Happy Pride, everybody!

CONTINUED ON PAGE 54

HAPPY PRIDE!

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MINNESOTA LEATHER PRIDE 2016:

The theme of the 2016 Minnesota Leather Pride celebration is "Think Kink." This year's dog tag, inspired by American pop art and combining bright silver metal with cloisonné (enamel) coloring, was designed by Andrew Bertke of Everett Allen Photography. Get your dog tag, while supplies last, at any Minnesota Leather Pride event or at the Minnesota Leather Pride booth at the Twin Cities Festival of Pride in Loring Park (Saturday and Sunday, June 25 and 26).

PLENTY OF MINNESOTA LEATHER PRIDE EVENTS FOR 2016

More events may be added, so visit www.mnleatherpride.org for the most up-to-date event information.

Saturday, June 11: Pride Picnic. Location TBD, 1 p.m. Presented by PEPRMNT.
Friday, June 17: Floggapalooza at The Saloon, 8–10 p.m. Presented by Knights of Leather.
Sunday, June 19: Coffee Bust at Twin Cities Leather & Latte. Time TBD. Presented by Minnesota Leather Pride board (come meet the board members!).
Tuesday, June 21: MAsT Swap Meet at Camp Bar in St. Paul. Time TBD. Presented by Twin Cities chapter of Masters And slaves Together.
Wednesday, June 22: BDSM Creative Collective Anthology Publication Party and Reading at Twin Cities Leather & Latte, 7 p.m.
Thursday, June 23: Atons Leather Pride Social & Smoker on the patio at eagleBOLTbar, 7–10 p.m. Cigars and bourbon shots for $10, plus a class taught by Scott. Presented by Atons of Minneapolis.
Saturday, June 25/Sunday, June 26: Stop by the Minnesota Leather Pride booth at the Twin Cities Pride Festival. An information table at the booth will be staffed by Minnesota Leather Pride's sponsor groups. Everyone is welcome, whether you are just curious about leather or have years of experience under your belt. The 2016 "Think Kink" dog tag will be available for $10, along with a Pride weekend special: Buy any two vintage Leather Pride dog tags (from 2015 or earlier) for $5 each and get a third vintage dog tag for free while supplies last. Loring Park (northwest side of the tennis courts), 10 a.m.–6 p.m.
Sunday, June 26: March with the kink and leather community in the Ashley Rukes GLBT Pride Parade and help carry Minnesota's giant leather pride flag. Meet at the corner of 3rd St. S. and Hennepin Ave. by 10:40 a.m. for a group photo; parade begins at 11 a.m. After marching, stick around for a group photo on the hill near the corner of Yale and Willow, at the edge of Loring Park, facing the Whitney Fine Arts building.

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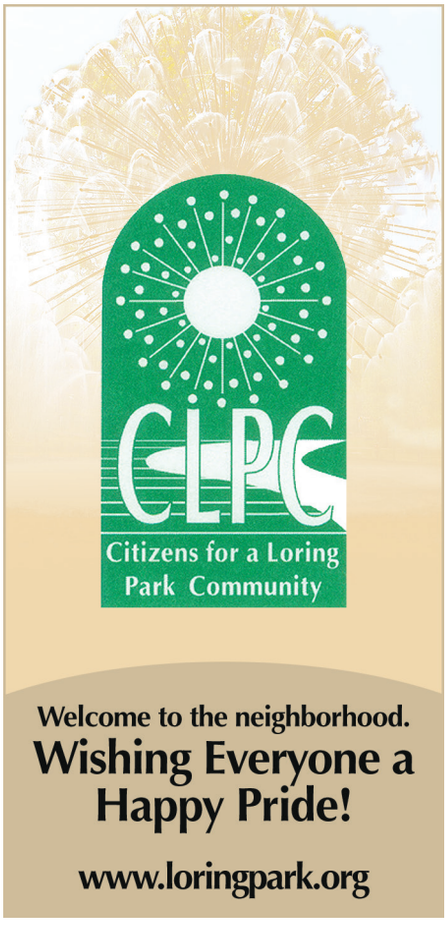
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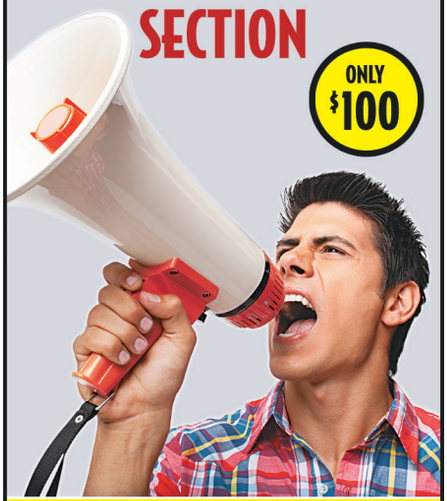
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OUR SCENE
- by Kathleen Bradbury -

GETTING PERSONAL WITH GYST FERMENTATION BAR

There's a story behind all our favorite foods: who made it, why it was made, and how it connects us to others. When sisters Kylene and Mel Guse started brewing up plans to open their own restaurant, they were strongly inspired by such stories behind artisanal fermented foods. The sisters joined forces with Jill Mott and Jim Bovino, opening GYST Fermentation Bar in November of 2014 with the hopes of connecting people to the stories behind their foods.

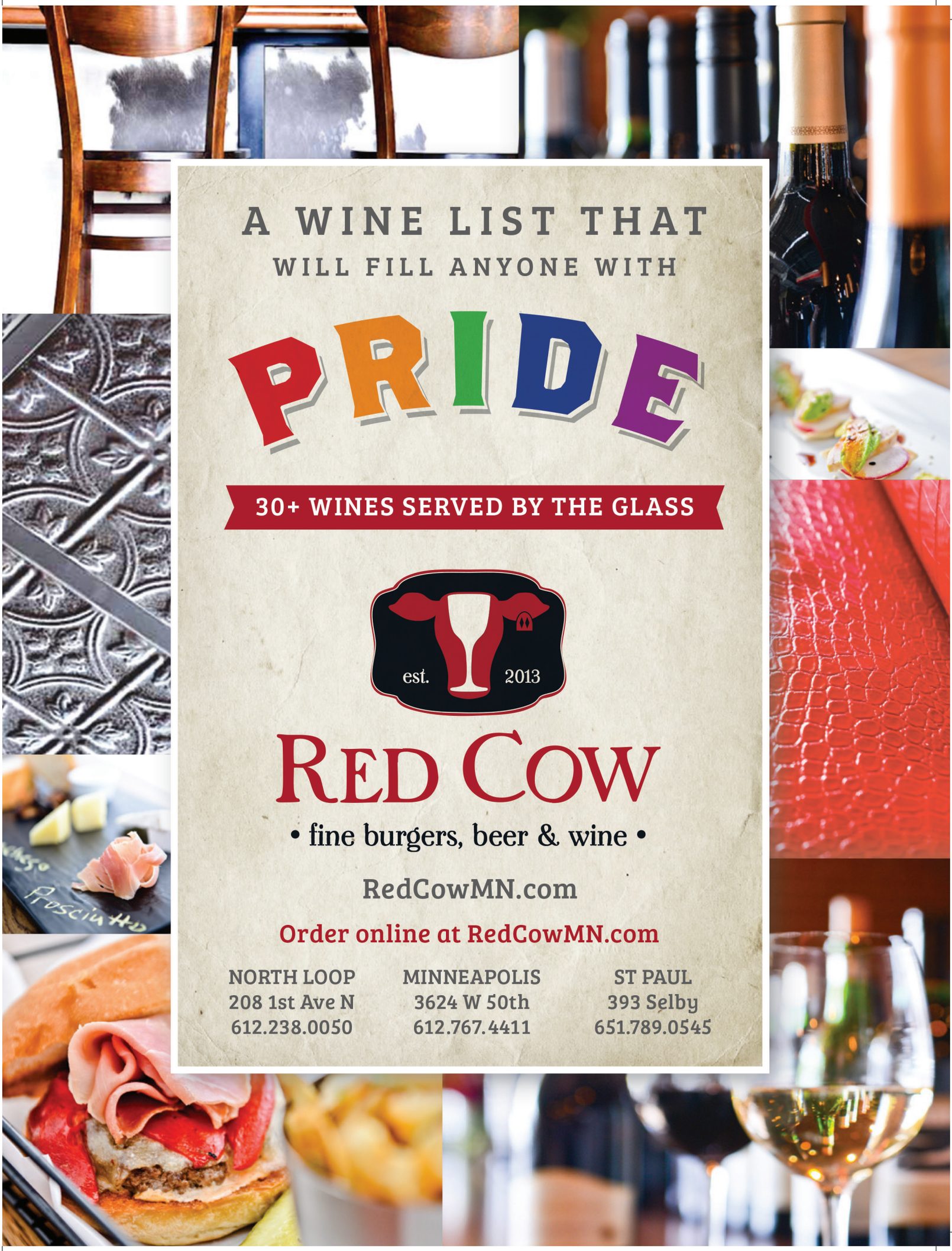


THE HALF MOTHER BOARD. PHOTO COURTESY OF GYST

Conveniently located in the Eat Street Neighborhood, GYST's bright red exterior raises the curiosity of many passersby. And the people who venture through the doors are in for a treat; GYST serves some of the finest (and most fun) noshes available. While fermented foods may bring back memories of grandma's pickles, there's more to ferments than classic pickles. Wine, beer, chocolate, cheese, and even some meats go through fermenting processes rich with history, culture, and (of course) stories.

Though the stories about the products can be very complex, the story behind GYST Fermentation Bar's name is simple; gyst means "the essence" or "the point." Through some deeper digging, Mel revealed that gyst is also an old English word for yeast, a key ingredient in the fermentation process. This may just seem like fun trivia, but the definition gets down to one of the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 58



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GYST'S TEAM AND INTERIOR. PHOTOS COURTESY OF GYST

core practices of the business: serving simple, natural fermentations in a fun, minimally processed way.

Guests are encouraged to approach GYST with an open mind, since the GYST experience more accurately aligns with the philosophies of a creative food business than a traditional restaurant. Kylene explains, "GYST is a creative food business that pairs experience with expertise to make food personal." Inspired by their passion for stories and personal connections to products, the GYST team hopes to encourage people to think beyond the spread in front of them and celebrate the craftsmanship behind each item.

The leadership team certainly brings high credentials as well, backing up their passion for their products with the knowledge and expertise required for stellar selection and presentation. Both Kylene and Mel (a certified sommelier) have an extensive history with Bi-Rite Market, a San Francisco-based company that is known for its local and organic selections. Jill Mott, an internationally certified sommelier and instructor known for her previous work with The Bachelor Farmer, brings her unrivaled knowledge to the beverage program. Rounding out the team as the director of food and fermentation is Jim Bovino from California Street Farm, a local urban garden.

Combining their passion and knowledge, the GYST team has carefully crafted a fun and evolving menu that highlights the joys of fermented foods. In addition to some global products, an impressive range of artisanal cheeses from the United States is available, due in part to GYST's desire to support the growing artisanal cheese movement. Kylene adds, "Cheese is really important and has value; we can be innovative with our selections because we are still defining the American cheese palate."

In addition to a diverse range of cheeses, the menu highlights GYST's partnerships with other local producers, such as Red Table Meat Company and The Lone Grazer Creamery. And the produce that appears in both fermented and fresh forms is gathered from local urban farms, such as Night Owl Farms, Twin Organics, and Stone's Throw. These partnerships not only guarantee that the selections are fresh and local, but they are also evidence of GYST's commitment to sustain and improve the local food system and the local economy.

While there's something for every palate on the menu, Kylene suggests people try The Mother board, which contains a vast array of cheeses, meats, pickled and fermented veggies, and other accompaniments. Kylene adds that the spring and early summer are a great time to test some early batches of amazing goat cheese. And if people are in more of a sandwich mood, the grilled cheese with sauerkraut or The Sandor (peanut butter and kimchi) sandwich are popular choices. Though The Sandor seems like an odd combination, Kylene says the pairing provides a strong Thai flavor profile that keeps people coming back for more.

As if the fermented food specialties weren't tempting enough, GYST also has a beverage program unlike any other in the Twin Cities, thanks to the help of Jill Mott and Mel Guse. Instead of a large and static wine list, GYST has developed rotating wine campaigns, meaning that the current wines are all chosen based on a particular theme. Currently, the selections are natural selections from the Loire Valley region, and future campaigns plan to highlight coastal wines and wines produced in different vessels. These campaigns give guests the opportunity to try rare wines within a themed mindset.

The other key element of the wine list is that all the wines are considered natural wines. Mott explains that natural wines use sustainable, organic, or biodynamic practices in the vineyard. Natural producers also pick grapes by hand and use all indigenous yeasts in their production processes. When Mott sources wines for GYST, she verifies that they are using low to no sulfur (an additive that easily covers up any impurities in wines).

Mott also emphasizes the importance of transparent business practices when choosing the wines for the campaigns: "We can call some of the winemakers our friends; we know they're being honest both in the vineyard and the cellar." While many producers attempt to latch on to the trend of natural or organic wines, Mott cautions that true natural wines take a while to cultivate. "It's not a practice that producers can quickly latch on to; it takes a lot of time for a vineyard to actually become dynamic and organic."

But the beverage program gets even more special: GYST offers several wines that are not available anywhere else in the Twin Cities. In their latest campaign, Mott estimates that around half of the wines are not available anywhere else in the Midwest. This limited distribution allows for each wine to be "an adventure and a revelation, guests might find a whole new favorite wine." Mott adds: "People are excited that we have these flavors available, and they know that they are getting the upper echelon of quality when they try our wines."

With a certified sommelier always on staff, guests can be certain to experience the wines in a much more complex way than they may be used to. Mott emphasizes GYST's commitment to telling the stories of their products: "It's the stories behind these producers and wines that give the guest context. With the wine campaign, guests can't help but notice the context, they can't help but ask questions to understand more about what they're drinking." And Mott's personal connections to the vineyards and cellars allow her to bring some personal touches to the wines, making a seemingly simple glass of red wine a truly unique experience.

GYST's personal connections expand out into their community, where the creative food business feels strongly supported by the Whittier neighborhood. GYST also plans to celebrate Pride with our GLBT community by offering a special Pride Wine Flight (red, white, and rosé for $15) during Pride week. Be sure to check them out on Facebook and drop in for what guarantees to be a unique experience with fermented food and drink. P

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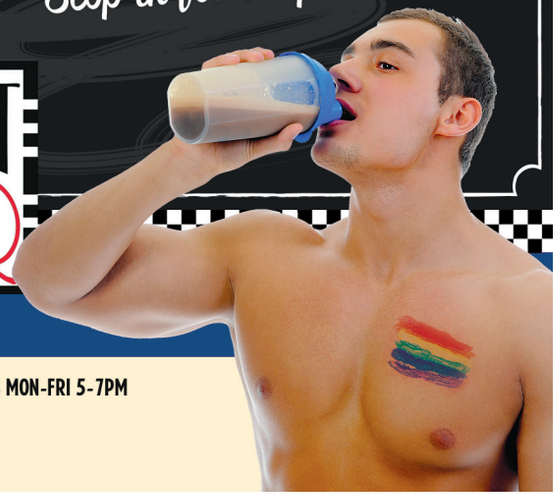


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- by Bradley Traynor -

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ba ba bum bum bummmm.
—theme from *Alice*





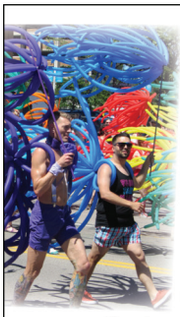
A TEAM OF TALENT WITH CHEF HEIDI MARSH, BAR MANAGER RYAN BAROTT, AND FRONT OF HOUSE MANAGER MICHAEL DEGIDIO. CHEF HEIDI'S PHILOSOPHIES INCLUDE MAKING THE FOOD SIMPLE, AFFORDABLE AND FUN, WHILE MAINTAINING "A CULTURE IN THE KITCHEN THAT REFLECTS EVERYDAY PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY." SHE SAYS THEY LOOK FOR HIDDEN TALENTS IN PEOPLE AND TEACH AS THEY GO TO KEEP A GREAT GROUP OF COOKS, HOSTS, BARTENDERS, AND SERVERS AT THE HI-LO.
PHOTOS BY HUBERT BONNET

The lyrics to the theme song of TV's *Alice*, a tribute to the hard-working lives of those who made the classic mid-century American diner an iconic institution, are equally apropos of my latest dining dalliance.

The new girl in question is H-iLo Diner. A 1957 Fodero diner who got her start in Gibsonia, Penn., this hardworking gal put in 50 years of culinary service before deciding it was time for a change. With the help of new owners James Brown (Brownsmith Restoration & Forage Modern Workshop), Pat McDonough (Blue Door Pub), Mike Smith (Brownsmith Restoration & Forage Modern Workshop), and Jeremy Woerner (Blue Door Pub), this storied hash house boarded two trucks and made for Minneapolis, getting a facelift and a new lease on life in the process. And a tasty one at that.

A fact I learned firsthand a few weeks back after I got the chance to slide into one of Hi-Lo's brand-spanking new booths with a couple friends for a meal that explained exactly why this steel lady of delicious-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 62



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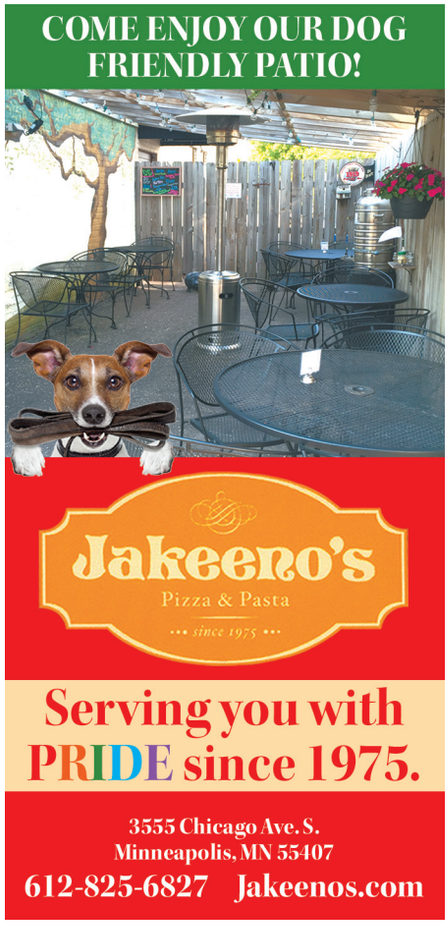
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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: FISH 'N' CHIPS WITH A FENDER BENDER COCKTAIL, THE YUM YUM YUM HI-TOP, THE HI-LO BURGER WITH CRINKLE CUT FRIES, TWO OF THE PIE CHOICES ON THE MENU: CHOCOLATE PEANUT BUTTER PIE AND SWEET TEA PIE, THE LOX AND DAM BENEDICT, AND THE ALBUQUERQUE SALAD.

ness has people routinely lined up out her door.

You can't begin to tell the culinary tale of Hi-Lo without meeting and instantly falling for the talents of executive chef Heidi Marsh. Heidi makes no bones about the method to her madness (genius), incorporating the diner's mission (approachable, affordable, mostly scratch-made diner fare) into every dish on the menu. Yes, the diner is a retro-liciously fun romp with its vintage, slightly hipster, but equally historic appeal. But it's also an earnest expression of honest-to-goodness good and thoughtful food. That doesn't take itself too seriously.

FISH 'N' CHIPS

Speaking of thoughtful, one of my first bites was the fish and chips. Where most are a heavy, batter-laden gut bomb of deep-fried frustration, Heidi's tempura-battered filets of fried caper-festooned fresh cod were light and crisp and completed with a remoulade that made my southern roots ache for home.

THE HI-TOP

Perhaps Hi-Lo Diner's greatest contribution to the Twin Cities foodscape is the Hi-Top. This warm, scratch-made-to-order fried donut (that's so much more than a donut) is topped with any of an amazing array of eight combinations from sweet to savory. At the Hi-Top of my list was the Gary Coop'er. Buttermilk-soaked, spicy corn flake-coated fried chicken is blanketed with creamy country gravy and a naughty maple bourbon syrup. Think chicken and waffles. Also high up on the list: the Yum Yum Yum. Because it's good, good, good. Spicy sweet Korean short ribs topped with a tart apple bacon slaw.

HI-LO BURGER

Everybody's doing a burger, but so few are actually doing it right. While most are trying to outdo one another with an overabundance of accoutrements, Hi-Lo has learned the valuable burger lesson that less is more. Quality house-ground beef on a Turtle Bread bun, layered with molten American cheese, a dollop of special sauce and a few house-brined sweet pickles promise a burger experience truly few can offer in this town. Translation: add this to your must-have burger list immediately.

HI-LO WINGS

Speaking of things everybody thinks they do better than anyone, but probably don't, let's talk chicken wings. Where others fall short, Hi-Lo's wings are non-hyperbolic flavor bombs. And they don't need a technicolor aftermarket sauce to make them shine either. These dry rub won-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 64



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ALBUQUERQUE SALAD

Let's be honest. I'm not a huge salad person. When faced with a menu full of meaty substance, I'm hard-pressed to opt for the lettuce-ier side of things. Unless, it's a weekday and I'm pretending to watch my calorie intake (which, let's be honest, never happens). Sometimes you just need a salad. And other times you just want a salad. Like, say, the fiery Southwestern wonder of the Albuquerque? The zesty marinated chicken alone could be a main dish all its own.

LOX AND DAM BENEDICT

Breakfast isn't just for breakfast at Hi-Lo. Always on the menu, never an afterthought, your first meal of the day can definitely be your best. Whenever you decide to eat it. The Lox and Dam beats any Benedict with a melt-in-your-mouth smoked salmon almost as rich as the hollandaise that blankets it. Best thing about a diner is you get to have breakfast and dessert *at the same time*! And the desserts at Hi-Lo aren't just a stale piece of pie on a plate either.

SWEET TEA PIE

Speaking of not just a stale piece of pie on a plate, the Sweet Tea pie is anything but. This homage to the syrupy sweet southern beverage was literally one of best bites of my meal. A tea-infused custardy slice is the perfect kiss on top of an already amazing meal. The chocolate peanut butter pie was another table favorite.

BIRTHDAY CAKE MALT

Nothing goes with a burger better than a malt and Hi-Lo's are highly addictive. You can stick to the classic chocolate, vanilla, or strawberry flavors or get serious with the likes of birthday cake (my personal favorite) or mint Oreo.

COCKTAILS

Drink-wise, Ryan Barott runs a cocktail menu from Dan Oskey of Tattersall Distillery as clever and playful as the menu. Take Hi-Lo's take on the Harvey Wallbanger. The Harvey Walltanger combines Tattersall's orange crema, Aquavit, Galliano, and Corazon bitters with that good old orange powder American classic, Tang. An array of ice cream cocktails adult up your dessert options as well.

If you're mouth isn't already watering inappropriately and you haven't yet made plans to carry your fanny as quickly to Hi-Lo as possible, I question your life skills. There's so much good food waiting for you. And although this is one of the hottest new spots in town, don't forget that Hi-Lo is, after all, a diner. Like all good diners, it's open late. And early. Just because there's a dinner rush, doesn't mean you won't get in. They open daily at 6:30 a.m. and stay open until 1:00 a.m. Sunday through Thursday and 2:00 a.m. on Friday and Saturday. And they've got a patio that seats 50 for those who prefer their dinner al fresco.

Top to bottom, Hi-Lo is a great concept turned into a tangible reality with a solid foundation of meaningful food created by a talented team committed to preserving an icon of Americana one tasty plate at a time.

Just like Alice, Hi-Lo seems to be working out. Here's hoping she stays awhile.

Ba ba bum bum bummmm. P





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SPOTLIGHT

- by John Townsend -



BLITHE SPIRIT. PHOTO BY VICKI MADSEN

PET SOUNDS / COVERS: A POP CONCERT

Through June 11
Cowles Center, 528 Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis
612-435-0055
www.cantussings.org

That dreamy men's chorus, Cantus, has turned to The Beach Boys for summer inspiration. What pop group could better suit that? And what group is better suited to do justice to their lush harmonies than Cantus: "Wouldn't It Be Nice," "Sloop John B.," "God Only Knows." They are joined by a live band of accomplished players: Lee Blaske on keyboard and woodwinds, Jeremy Boettcher on bass, and David Schmalenberger on drums.

Chris Foss, Cantus bass, says, "*Pet Sounds* is a coming of age story with a bittersweet pastiche of songs recalling the pangs of unrequited love. Many say the album elevated pop recordings to a larger, grander art form — one that collectively lives and breathes together. That resonated with us and the album really speaks to the narrative program we strive to create."

BLITHE SPIRIT

Through June 12
Artistry Black Box Theater, 1800 W. Old Shakopee Rd. Bloomington
951-563-8575
www.artistrymn.org

Noël Coward looms as one of the iconic gay playwrights for all time. He is best remembered for his mischievous high-brow wit, and did you know he was actually blacklisted by Adolph Hitler? He would have been arrested and murdered had the Führer successfully invaded England. Coward actually trained for espionage work with Ian Fleming who would go on to create James Bond 007.

Coward was known to be gay during the World War II years, but it wasn't spoken of. His elegant and flamboyant signature style earned him both admiration and ridicule. He is beloved for his screenplay for the patriotic film gem, *In Which We Serve* (1942). Moreover, he not only also acted in the film, but co-directed it with David Lean. Yes! You got that right: the man who went on to direct *The Bridge on the River Kwai, Lawrence of Arabia, Doctor Zhivago*, and *Ryan's Daughter*.

Coward was so highly regarded by King George VI, that the monarch wanted him to receive a knighthood but Prime Minister Winston Churchill stood in the way. He was also a lauded popular songwriter; "Mad Dogs and Englishmen" is a celebrated classic comedic tune. His most popular play, *Blithe Spirit* (1941), is a masterwork of his trademark light comedic style, but mixed with the dark edge of the supernatural. It suited the year it was created because the English audience needed to laugh, with the Nazis on the verge of nearly conquering them. That proverbial balance of light and dark.

At Artistry, director Ellen Fenster relates how Coward maintained a bright attitude in spite of it all: "Coward's jokes are often at the expense of the upper class, the institution of marriage, and the war of the sexes. Yet somehow his plays don't rely on cynicism to make their points. Coward's keen insight and sharp wit entertains without alienating, something rare in modern playwriting."

NEW WORKS 4 WEEKS

Through June 19
Red Eye Theater, 15 W 14th St., Minneapolis
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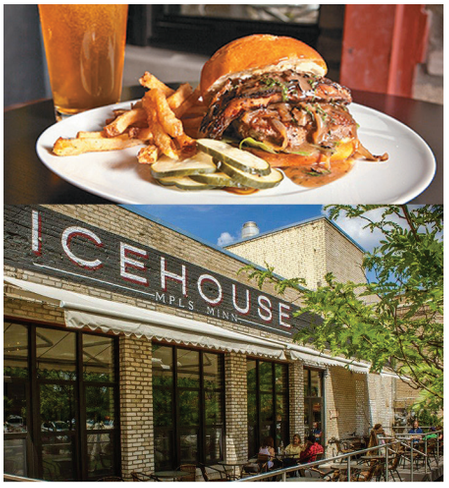
Red Eye Theater has long been the "go-to" place for experimental performance pieces. Its month-long series of new work is even edgier than much of its work the rest of the year. The *New Works 4 Weeks* festival is in full swing now. Therese Madaus's *Read My Lips / Don't Lie* (June 9–12) explores lip sync, drag, dance, and hidden desire. Lip sync becomes choreography and lips are limbs. The dance artists will consider masculinity, longing, and inquiring into what



SCAPEGOAT. PHOTO BY BRUCE SILCOX

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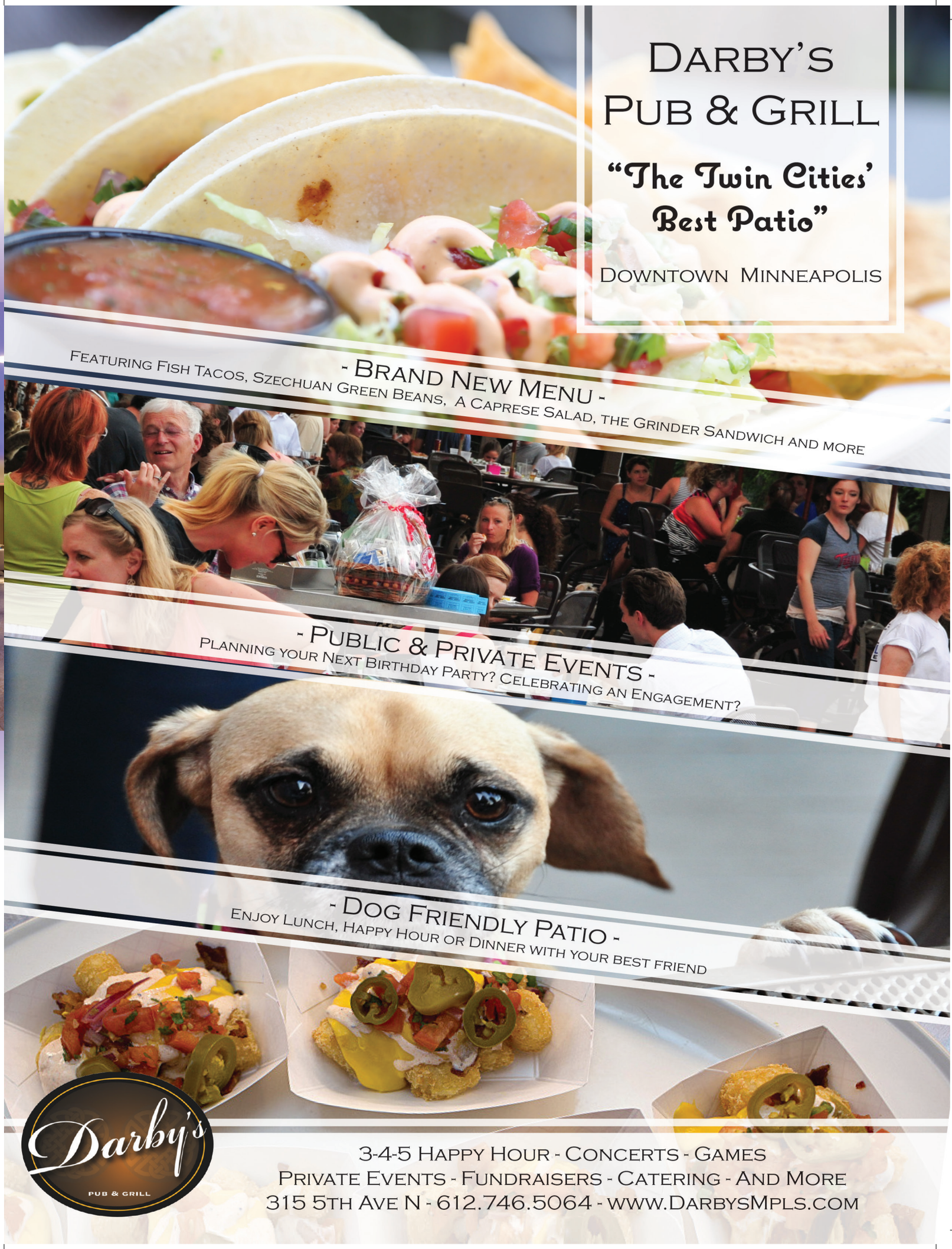
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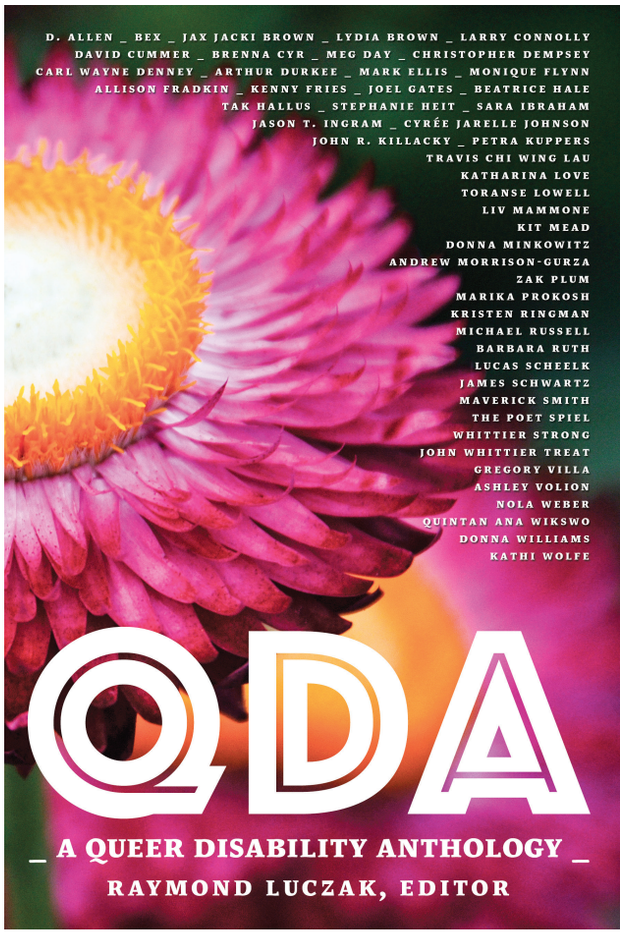
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QDA: A QUEER DISABILITY ANTHOLOGY.

is real and what is not. Madaus performs with Megan Mayer and Stephanie Strombelis.

Dolo McComb, who impressed with her sensual choreography in last year's Red Eye production of *The Slow Motion Carnival*, is staging dancers and movers as they explore sacred space. Titled *woo* (June 16–19), this piece is said to take us into the nature of truth, medicine, ecstasy, slapstick, and divinity in everyday life. Kimberly Lesik, Scott Stafford, and guest artist Lia Bentley are featured in the ensemble.

SCAPEGOAT

Through June 26
Pillsbury House Theatre, 3501 Chicago Ave., Minneapolis
612-824-1459
www.pillsburyhousetheatre.org

When playwright Christina M. Ham (*Crash Test Dummies, Nina Simone: Four Women*) was teaching lynching dramas she uncovered one by Ida B.Wells. This story related the Elaine, Ark. race riots by black farmers who were trying to organize a union. It was one of the worst massacres of the post-Reconstruction era and a historic example of grass roots organizing.

Ham shares, "I was inspired to write *Scapegoat* for the generations of my family that were sharecroppers in Alabama and South Carolina. I was woefully ignorant about what a sharecropper did and the exploitation that they suffered post-emancipation. The amount of poverty that was experienced by these croppers, both black and white, made me want to examine them more closely. We are all familiar with the Walker Evans and Dorothea Lange WPA photos in Alabama of the croppers, but the stories behind the photos and the thousands like them are missing."

QUEER PROM

June 19, 7:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.
Hell's Kitchen, 80 S 9th St., Minneapolis
www.tctwentypercent.org

It's that time of year again! 20% Theatre Company Twin Cities hosts their fifth annual Queer Prom which welcomes all (18+) queers and allies. DJ Shannon Blowtorch and performers, including Martina Maraschino and Blaze Bordeaux, will energize the prom spirit at the delicious Hell's Kitchen. Speaking of spirits, you can grab a specialty cocktail and drink specials at the cash bar.

A prom for queer people is actually a healing experience. By and large, if GLBTQ Americans attended their high school prom at all, it was with a person of the gender they were not actually attracted to or they went without feeling the freedom to show their preferred gender expression and presentation. A queer prom can balance the scales and make for closure on the problem of feeling excluded at high school's signature event.

QDA: A QUEER DISABILITY ANTHOLOGY

www.squaresandrebels.com

Persons with disabilities are more marginalized than any group of people. They are routinely asexualized, portrayed in infantile terms, and expected to function in the cookie-cutter ways that those without disabilities can and do. In *QDA: A Queer Disability Anthology*, Raymond Luczak has mindfully and lovingly edited a stunning assemblage of stories, poems, and comic strips by queer voices that stretch beyond the grievance list approach that too often passes for art in service of identity politics.This anthology is a landmark in the history of queer art and literature.

For example, *Outcast: Deaf, Gay, Christian* by Joel Gates is not just another queer rant against conservative Christianity. He relates specific experiences and observations of his world and his inner states in a way that is poignant, wrenching, and clear. Early on he had feelings of same-sex attraction and as time went on he became increasingly alienated from not being free to talk about it and, therefore, work with it. There is that tragic division between the family you love and the person within you that you are meant to be. Few stories capture that as vividly as this one.

Poet Marika Prokosh's *The Use of Blindness* is one of those rare and great works that immediately plunges you into its own distinct dimension. She takes us into the full weight of her experience, something not widely understood in these days of sound bites, slogans, and instant gratification: "My sudden double / vision was caused by a swollen cornea, / not an illustrative fracturing of the self. Reverse / the cause and effect. If you invoke a simile / for schizophrenia, I will scream." Prokosh makes demands of her reader, as opposed to appealing to a lower common denominator.

Donna Moskowitz's *How I Got Disabled* is a lively account of how individual a disability can be as she relates her struggle with Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI): "It was a strange ailment, reader." She also goes into fascinating bits and pieces about women she has dated. Kathi Wolfe of *The Uppity Blind Girls Poems* fame is well-represented in *QDA* with irreverent and delightful selections. There is also fine poetry by David Cummer. Moreover, there are captivating comic strips by Bex and Zak Plum. P


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OUR SCENE
- by Shane Lueck -

NICK JONAS

THE MAN OF MANY HATS

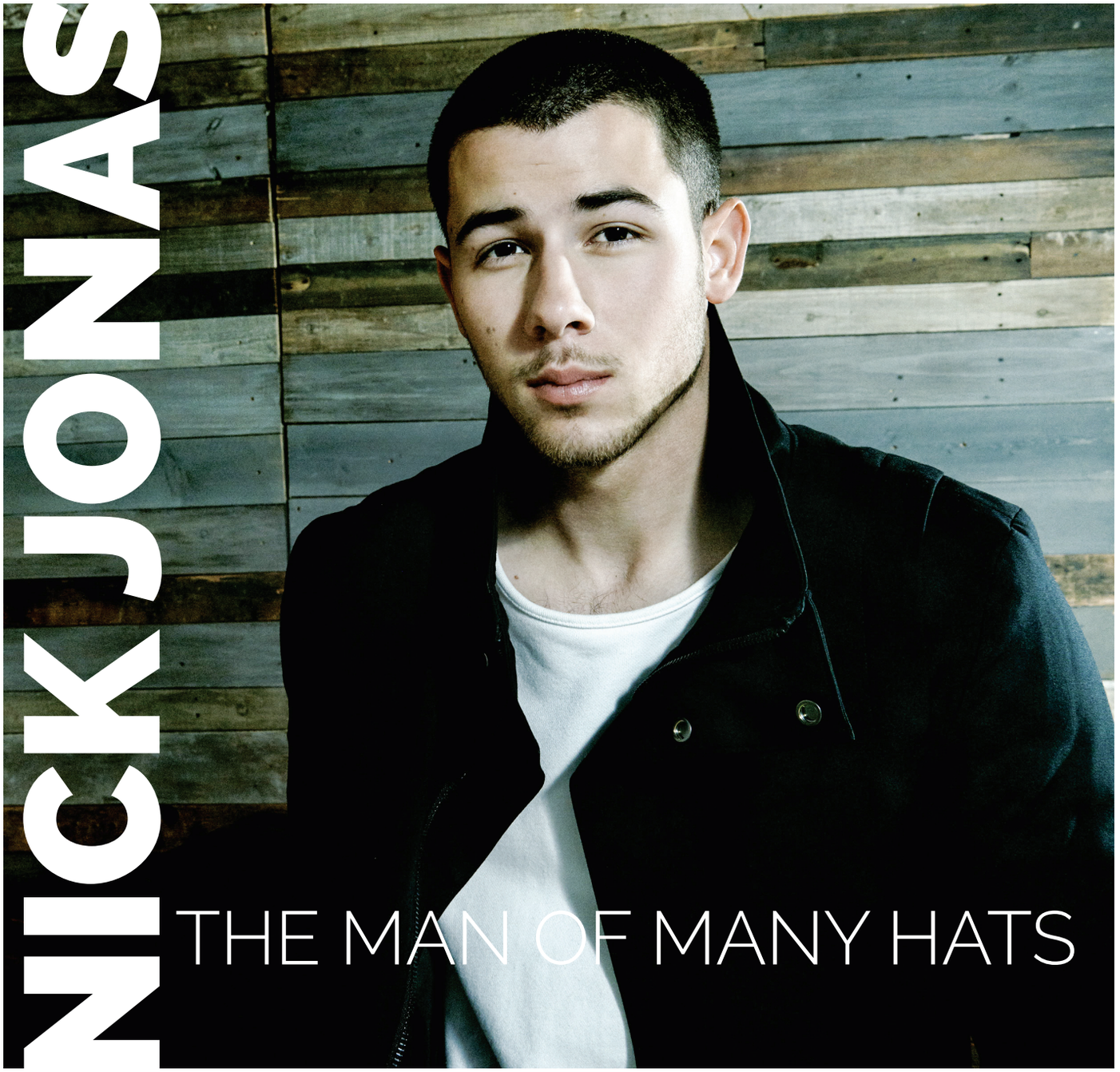


PHOTO BY YU TSAI

Trying to recover from the child star or teen idol label has been the demise of countless celebrities, but Nick Jonas has thoroughly shucked that label and emerged as an adult solo artist, and he can feel it."

I feel really free," he assures me. "The most free in my life that I've ever been. Career-wise I don't feel trapped. I feel great. And as far as me, Nick, as a person, I feel the most free."

Creatively, the 23-year-old is in a spot where he is proud of the work he's doing and admits, "I'm able to just create freely and do some things that are pushing the envelope for me a bit and hopefully really connecting with my audience. In the past, I was creating and feeling like I have to censor myself in some way, and figure out the best way to say something that's not necessarily the most honest. I don't have to do that anymore."

By the time Jonas was a teenager, he already had a career that working actors could only fever-dream about: being discovered in a hair salon when he was six years old, performing on the Broadway stage, and starring in a series of Disney TV shows and the *Camp Rock* movie franchise. Of course,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 74



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he was also one-third of the mass hysteria-inducing boy band Jonas Brothers, with brothers Kevin and Joe.

Experiencing that magnitude of fame — the kind where your face is plastered over lunch boxes, T-shirts, and television screens — made him nervous. The pressure to be perfect, lest everything disappear, was a legitimate and real fear for him. The brothers rode the highs and lows of teen stardom until they finally split in 2013, after a 2010 hiatus, to explore solo projects. It was difficult and emotional for all of them, Jonas says, but he acknowledges that "it would have ended badly if we hadn't ended it when we did."

In the last couple of years, Jonas has worked hard to reintroduce himself to the world. He explored new sides of himself with 2014's self-titled album, *Nick Jonas,* an R&B-infused pop confection that's Timberlake-esque. It features the hit single, "Jealous," which everyone in the known world has heard a version of, whether it be the gospel version, Tinashe remix, or the original.



PHOTO BY YU TSAI

Jonas has also kept active in TV, playing a gay MMA fighter on the DirecTV drama *Kingdom* and flexing his comedy skills on Fox's horror spoof, *Scream Queens.* Jonas' path to an EGOT puts him squarely in the viewfinder of all cameras, so it's no surprise that he's been in the tabloids for just about everything ranging from his 2015 breakup with long-term girlfriend Olivia Culpo, to speculation about his sexuality, to gossip that he's been hooking up with Kate Hudson.

Jonas has lately been drawn to complicated depictions of masculinity. For example, neither of the characters he's playing is really out of the closet. "My character on *Kingdom* deals with so much," he says. "There's a responsibility that I feel to tell that story as honestly as possible and not be afraid of it. He's living in an incredibly macho world and isn't able to be who he wants to be or who he is."

Unsurprisingly, Jonas has attracted a fervent gay fan base that isn't just checking for his TV roles and music, but his frequent appearances at Pride parades and gay clubs, as well. Equality is a very important issue to him, he insists, explaining that his theater background and exposure to the community at an early age heightened his awareness. Publicly, it appears as if he's been carefully toeing a line, maintaining his heterosexuality, but still playing coy about any possible relationships with men. At the same time, it feels like a new frontier to see a mainstream, very straight–seeming male pop star unabashedly catering to the gay community without fear of stigma.

But that commitment to the community has also been met with backlash, with critics saying Jonas is merely gay-baiting, to which Jonas just shakes his head. It frustrates him that some people think he's exploiting the community for his own ends. "I think there is negativity on any move toward progress," he shares. "Things that make people uncomfortable cause them to go to places where they say things that are really quite the opposite of where I think we need to take things. So there's, on my part, no question of my intention or my heart and the purity of that. I've just got to stay in that and not worry about the other stuff."

It would appear his commitment to the GLBT community knows no bounds, as he and Demi Lovato cancelled two tour dates that were scheduled for North Carolina in the wake of HB2. But that decision didn't come lightly. "I think that it's an incredibly tough situation overall and Demi and I and our team did our best to make what we felt was the best decision possible to hopefully see a positive outcome from this unfortunate situation," he sighs before continuing. "And we are understanding the fact that this is disappointing to our fans but we're just really hopeful that they understand and that there is real change from this."

That tour is to promote the release of his new album, *Last Year Was Complicated,* out June 10. When we start talking music, Jonas begins talking quicker, clearly excited for fans to hear his new music. After a year of professional growth and personal upheaval, Jonas is using the new record to document his evolution emotionally, vocally, and instrumentally. "I think personal life and career have to kind of line up in the sense that my career changed so dramatically," he says, "and then I think I had some catching up to do."

The word "vulnerable" comes up a lot when he talks about the project. By that he means not just in the songs, but in his musicianship. "I play drums, guitar, keys. That's a huge part of my artistry, and I'm going to make an effort to show more of that," he says.

He mentions new songs — "Chainsaw" about his breakup with Culpo and "Don't Make Me Choose" — that he feels are showcasing this more vulnerable self. Most of the album was recorded at Jonas' house, a place he considers therapeutic and that helped him after his breakup. He doesn't hide the fact that the split is a large influence on the new songs. "Naturally I'm going to pull a lot from that," he says. "Not even so much about that relationship in particular, but about my state of mind, who I want to be. I'm meeting new people, and what that has been like. Also, just as a general change in my life. This year has been kind of nuts."

This album is about telling Jonas' story using his words, his way. "I think the main thing for me on this record was digging as deep as possible in my song writing and laying out my story the best way I could," he shares. "It's been an interesting year, to get to work through all that through the music feels really good."

With his previous albums being heavily influenced by R&B, fans can expect a similar sound from Jonas' newest venture…but with a twist. "I think it's the combination of sounds for me," Jonas says, sounding giddy. "Between my classic soul to more modern stuff that I'm really liking. This album is about trying to continue to push myself to grow and bring different elements of my sound and also some alternative music that I've really enjoyed."

It seems Jonas succeeds at anything he tries, landing multiple starring roles on TV and film, accompanied by chart-topping music, so I had to ask: is there something you've tried and not been good at? Jonas lets out the loudest laugh of the conversation before finally saying, "Yeah a few things. I usually pursue things with a really humble attitude and grow as much as possible. I'm sure one day I'll meet my match and fail miserably, but for now, things seem to be working out."



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STRANGE NAMES FRONT MAN LIAM BENZVI

ON PRONOUNS, EYE CONTACT, AND FEELING FREE

I heard murmurings of a hot local band called Strange Names while finishing up my undergrad at the University of Minnesota roughly five years ago. This fantastic trio made up of Liam Benzvi, Francis Ximenez, and Fletcher Aleckson have since relocated to Benzvi's hometown of Brooklyn, New York and are knee-deep in the production of their second studio album with Frenchkiss Records. In the past couple years, they have toured nationally, playing countless venues, and opening for the likes of Azealia Banks, Janelle Monae, and Yeasayer. Known for their "next-wave" sound, the band delivers hypnotic riffs and iconic pop-rock vocals that make you want to move. I was lucky enough to catch Benzvi for an interview before he set off for some creative exploration in Berlin. Benzi was refreshingly candid, with a charisma as evident in conversation as it is in performance.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 78

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What's new, Liam?

Liam Benzvi: We toured in the fall then had some down time in New York, some time to get to know ourselves a little better. We just wrote a lot and kind of went through a lot of emotions individually and now we're ready to put all of that into a focused well we can all pull from for this next record. We already recorded an A Side/B Side in February so, as a physical release, we're going to release that exclusively in the U.K., and then have it be a U.S. import, which is hilarious for an American band to do, but we're silly. We just really are itching to go overseas at this point. I feel like what we're making will resonate there. We've never been there as a band and we're dying to go.

How do you feel this new album is going to be different from what we have heard from Strange Names before?

LB: We've been saying it's going to be weirder. We're all yearning to throw ideas at the wall and watch them fall. If we can give ourselves the freedom to do that, we'll have a really good record. We're feeling a lot freer and we want to hold ourselves accountable for every single thing that we do.

You graduated from the Guthrie's BFA Acting Conservatory, one of the most intensive acting programs in the country. Have your experiences as an actor influenced your approach to being a musician?

LB: One hundred percent. You have to get up on stage and you have to address an audience. I feel like I've seen a lot of [musicians] be very introverted and you get bored when you see someone kind of uncomfortable, relying on the fact that they might seem brooding. I find that almost insulting. You pay to see a show and you should get a show. You have to be conscious of that. I find "cool" to be very boring.

Yeah, I think there's a lot to be said for showing an audience gratitude in an authentic way.

LB: Last year I saw Savages play at Mercury Lounge. They were doing a bunch of small shows at different New York venues. It was one of the most powerful performances I've ever seen. The singer, Jehnny Beth, she looked everyone in the audience directly in the eye and would sing to them with such intensity. I couldn't help but turn completely red and be completely engaged. That was right before we were about to tour with Azealia Banks, so I really took to heart what [Jehnny Beth] was doing.

Strange Names started in the Twin Cities. How are Twin Cities audiences different from audiences nationwide?





I feel like I've seen a lot of [musicians] be very introverted and you get bored when you see someone kind of uncomfortable.

LB: It's so fun to be in a band in the Twin Cities. In some ways I feel like we're not a Twin Cities band any more because we moved away two years ago now, but we always feel very welcomed. People have a lot of fun at shows there. New York is lonely. The Twin Cities definitely started the fire.

I love your music video for "Trespassing." It's very visceral, sexual, dark, and strange. How did that collaboration with avant-garde filmmakers, Anthony and Alex, come about?

LB: Anthony and Alex are fucking rock stars. They have a very clear aesthetic. They came and saw us perform and we spoke after. When anyone looks you directly in the eyes and has so much conviction with whatever their idea is, you kind of can't help but fall in love with it, unless it's just heinous. We really wanted to go for a very camp, very weird, grotesque video and they were willing to do it on a limited budget. So we went for it, drove to Jersey City to this crazy hotel and spent almost 24 hours there. We even saw this cycle of prostitutes and their Johns going in and out all night while we were filming.

Strange Names has been noted for having a throwback glam-pop feel. When do you remember first finding an affinity to '80s sounds?

LB: I used to dance around my mom's bedroom to Cyndi Lauper when I was a little kid and B 52's I was all about. As I got a little older I got into Siouxsie and the Cure. I actually just got a Siouxsie and the Banshees tattoo on my arm. There was just something super cool about that [music], kind of glam, kind of goth. I didn't see that in the '90s.

What challenges have come about as a queer artist in a genre that is still predominantly heterosexual?

LB: I've never really cared that much about it, but I have been using the male pronoun as the subject a lot more. I'm into it. Being an actor, you want to be a chameleon. You have a lot of hostile people telling you to be a versatile actor and what they really mean is be heterosexual on stage. The conservatory program was a great experience, but it put pressure on me to distance myself personally from the music I was making. Since I've stopped acting formally, I've become a lot more comfortable with myself and what I want to express in my lyrics. Part of that is also that now I've been in a couple relationships. I've been totally obsessed with people and I'm like, fuck it, I'm just going to say *him*. P

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MINNESOTA'S OWN JASON MATHESON PREPARES FOR A NATIONAL TEST-RUN OF HIS DAYTIME TALK SHOW, *THE JASON SHOW.* PHOTO BY ANTHONY ONGARO

JASON MATHESON
Goes National

A young boy sits on a giant rock. With the wilderness on his grandfather's property as his audience, that rock serves as the stage from which the boy hosts a Johnny Carson-like talk show.

To go from that to actually having a talk show is pretty extraordinary and it "feels pretty surreal," says Jason Matheson. "I'm one of the lucky few. When people in my life vacillated on what they wanted to do, I've always, always known."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 82

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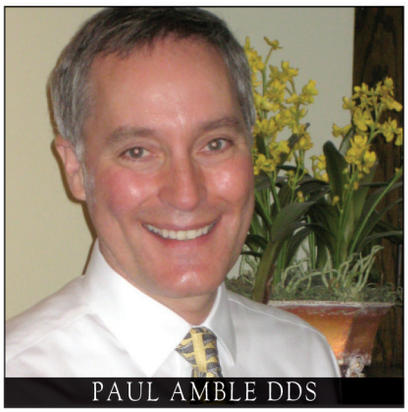
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While other kids were watching cartoons, the future host of *The Jason Show* was in the house watching (and studying) Johnny Carson, Letterman, and Oprah. "It's always been a source of fascination," Matheson shares. "It's a format that has always appealed to me because of the ability to be yourself."

Matheson began his TV career as a WCCO-TV dispatcher in 1997. In 2000 he left WCCO to go to Fox 9 and produce entertainment segments. That expanded into on-camera spots and eventually a 30-minute show. He also was allowed to do a radio show that helped catapult his TV career. Now, after a brief stint back at WCCO, Matheson has returned to Fox 9 for that dream job: hosting a talk show.

"FORMAT WISE, THE PACE OF THE SHOW WILL QUICKEN, BUT THE CONTENT WILL REMAIN THE SAME."

The Jason Show debuted August 21, 2015 and is already slated for a national test-run. If you ask Matheson, the greatest gift he could have received came from his boss, who discovered Oprah in Chicago. "He gave her the same advice that he gave me which is, go on the air and be yourself," he says. "When a boss tells you that, especially in this business, it's pretty extraordinary. Not just for a talk show, but I think that really is the key to being successful in TV. I think people can spot when you're being phony or you're just kind of faking or phoning it in. So it sounds like a really simple piece of advice, but it's important and it's sometimes hard to do."

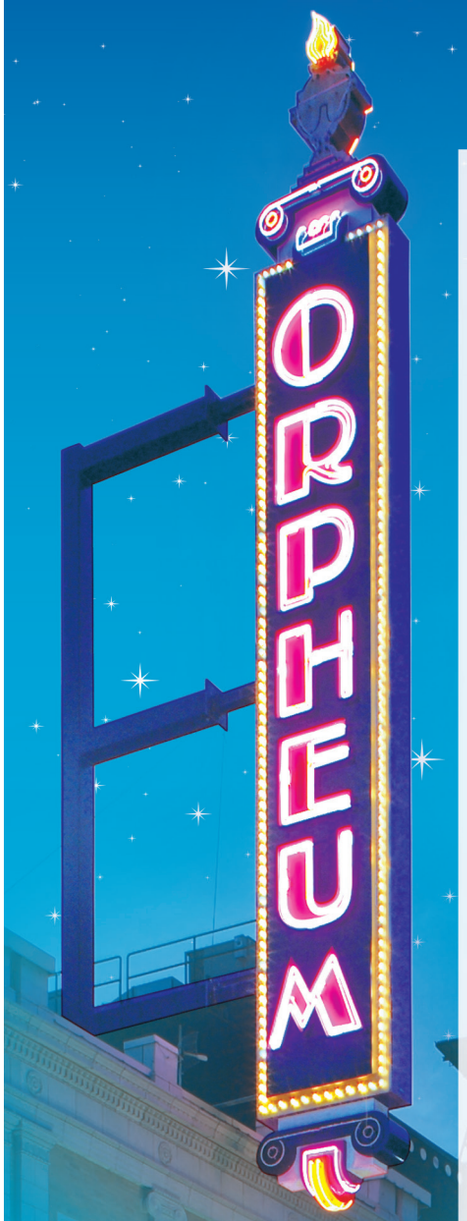
With Matheson behind the desk, and everyone involved with the show a lover of daytime TV, he says they were able to create a formula that works. "We took the heart of Oprah, the snarkiness of Letterman, the games of Fallon, and we just took pieces of all of our favorite shows and melded them together and did it in our own way. In a very Minnesota, Midwest way," he shares. "I think that's one of the great things about the national version of the show is the fact that we're not L.A.-ing it up. It's very purposeful that the show was here. They could have moved it if they wanted to, even for this test, but it's very deliberate that the show's here. Because there are so many shows in New York and L.A., that they wanted that Midwest point of view that comes from this area."

The Midwest has certainly been lacking representation in the talk show arena since *Oprah* left the air, and *The Jason Show* is ready to step into the ring. With tests confirmed through June and into early July in the Dallas, L.A., and Phoenix markets, Matheson confirms that not a whole lot is going to change. Format wise, the pace of the show will



A POP CULTURE ENTHUSIAST, JASON MATHESON (RIGHT) DISCUSSES RECENT HEADLINES.. PHOTO BY ANTHONY ONGARO

CONTINUED ON PAGE 84



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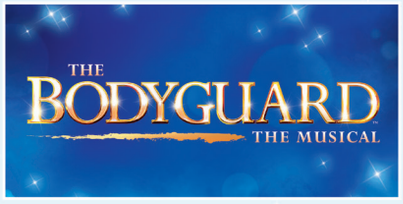
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MATHESON SAYS VIEWERS WILL SEE BASICALLY THE SAME SET AS ALWAYS, JUST SLIGHTLY ENLARGED AND "SPRUCED UP A BIT." PHOTO BY ANTHONY ONGARO

quicken, but the content will remain the same.

"You're going to notice that we're really going to spotlight Minnesota and what makes us great and why people are so fascinated by Minnesota," Matheson laughs. "I mean, if you look at BuzzFeed, every other day there is a Minnesota-themed list. So we're going to explore that. It's very funny, but it's true. As far as physical changes or visual changes, they're enlarging the set. They're adding elements to make it a little grander, a little bigger, but still keeping that intimate feel. Visually, that's what you'll notice, basically just sprucing it up a little bit."

According to Matheson, the Minnesota roots of the show are exactly what drew attention to his show in the first place, and he can't wait to showcase what The North Star State has to offer. Saying just how proud he is of the Twin Cities, he adds, "It would mean the world to everyone on the show if the show was kind of a vehicle to shine a spotlight on the area so that we can show them we're more than just a chilly tundra. It would mean a lot."

"We're really going to try to dispel the perception that it's just winter 12 months out of the year," he continues. "We know it, but I think we want to surprise people with the amount of culture here. I mean, I don't think a lot of people know that we're second to New York in theater seats per capita. And we're in the top cities as far as biking and hiking trails. So all of that, our light-hearted goal is to break down all of those myths and all of those goofy stereotypes that exist about Minnesota. If we can do that, if we can chip away at maybe one or two of them, that would be great."

It's a great goal, but surely getting a national test less than a year after debuting in the local market is unusual. As Matheson confirms, normally the timeline for a national expansion happens very differently. Fox tests shows almost every year, usually in the summer, but what makes *The Jason Show* different from other short-lived programs like *Bethanny* (hosted by Real Housewife Bethanny Frankel) or *Kris* (hosted by Kris Jenner), is that Matheson hosts an already-established show. If the national run of the show doesn't work out, for whatever reason, Matheson will still have a show here in Minnesota.

The rare opportunity for a national show isn't lost on Matheson. "I'm not trying to be sappy here, but when I was that little kid on the rock, my only dream was to do television in whatever capacity," he says. "So I always say all of this is gravy. This is all like extra blessings. And it just means that sometimes, you dream a certain size, but the world has different plans sometimes and you just have to go with it. It means a lot to me, the fact that the show has done well here and the fact that the company wants to take a chance to see if it would work nationally — are you kidding me? That's a small pool of people that has had this opportunity. So, to have it? I don't take it lightly. It's the definition of a dream come true."

Yes, getting a chance to test a national talk show program is astounding, but especially so for Matheson. "As an out gay man, to have this opportunity, as the younger version of myself growing up in small-town Indiana, I would never have imagined that I would be given this platform." P

The Jason Show *airs in Minneapolis (KMSP) at 10 a.m. Confirmed locations for the national test beginning June 6 include Los Angeles (KTTV at 1 p.m.), Dallas (KDFW at 2 p.m.), and Phoenix (KSAZ at 2 p.m.).*

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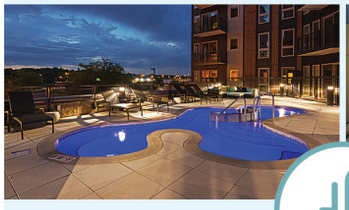
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FINDING YOUR VOICE:
HOW THE MINNESOTA BOYCHOIR HELPS YOUNG MEN DISCOVER THEIR IDENTITY



THE BOYCHOIR AT THE VATICAN, 2011. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MINNESOTA BOYCHOIR

What each of us does to commemorate Pride varies. Some stroll through Loring Park during the festival while, for others, it's gathering with friends over brunch. For the entire GLBTQA community, Pride serves as an annual check-in. We reminiscence over how far we've come and rally together to battle for inclusion and basic rights. Pride is an opportunity for those looking to be a part of something bigger to make an impact as a united front. It allows those struggling with their identity to find their voice.

The Minnesota Boychoir's motto of "helping boys find their voice" is exactly what they have done for 54 years. The nonprofit serves young men seven to 18 years old from Minneapolis, Saint Paul, and over 40 suburbs. And similar to what Pride does for the *Lavender* community, the Boychoir strengthens individual voices to create a unified sound that changes lives.

Isaac van Bruggen is an alum of the Boychoir, first joining in sixth grade and singing through graduation from Irondale High School. Through the organization, he performed on a cruise to Alaska and went on a whirlwind tour to Toronto, Ottawa, Quebec City, and Montreal. On his 16th birthday in 2007, van Bruggen and fellow Boychoir members headlined a concert inside the Sydney Opera House in Australia. And, for Isaac, the Boychoir was a safe haven.

"The Boychoir was the one place outside of my immediate family where I felt like I could be myself 100 percent of the time. It allowed me to explore











CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: INSIDE ST. PETER'S BASILICA AT THE VATICAN, 2011; CONCERT AT LANDMARK CENTER, 1995; SENIORS AT WAPO WITH MARK JOHNSON, INCLUDING ISAAC VAN BRUGGEN, THIRD FROM RIGHT; VANYA VOSKRESENSKY; AND HORNE/ROUILLARD FAMILY (MAX IS AT TOP). PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE MINNESOTA BOYCHOIR

who I am and gave me a space to reveal new sides of myself without fear. A big part of this journey was seeing successful gay adults; something that, at 17, I knew was possible, but was still a scary thought. That was huge."

When Vanya Voskresensky struggled with the coming out process as a ninth grader at Mounds View High School, Boychoir families were there to provide what many teens take for granted.

"Coming from a family that doesn't talk about the subject or asks 'when will you propose to her' each time my girl bestie visits, I needed a family that was able to accept and help me. With extremely limited support from home, I turned to the Boychoir family for help. I didn't realize the mess I was in. Parents of other members saw my challenges and I was offered a job at a family restaurant, beds to sleep in and homes to stay in, and offered the acceptance I missed at home. I don't know of any other organization that would provide as much support and love in times of need as this one. Now, I give back as much as I can. It's the least I can do. The least."

Voskresensky, who was in the Boychoir for eight years, now is a chaperone on music retreats and tours, including this year's trip to Kansas City. He's serving as a role model to current members.

The winning formula of creating community spanning generations is developed by Executive and Artistic Director Mark Johnson, who started with the Boychoir in 1992.

"Our family community is so close, tight-knit, loving, and supportive that

CONTINUED ON PAGE 90


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THU, OCT 20
Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet in *Dracula*

with live orchestra

SAT, NOV 12
Aszure Barton & Artists in *Awáa*

TUE, JAN 24
Batsheva Dance Company in *Decadance 2017*

THU, FEB 16
CCN-Ballet de Lorraine

TUE, FEB 28
Bereishit Dance Company

with live music on stage

TUE-WED, MAR 21-22
Kidd Pivot/Electric Company Theatre in *Betroffenheit*

SAT, MAR 25
Malandain Ballet Biarritz in *La Belle et la Bête*

SAT, APR 8
Scottish Ballet in Matthew Bourne's *Highland Fling*

with live orchestra

SAT, APR 22
Brian Brooks Moving Company in a mixed repertory including *Torrent* with U of M students

WED, MAY 17
Eifman Ballet in *Red Giselle*



Photos © Nisbet Wylie

This season's programming is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a Minnesota State Arts Board Operating Support grant, thanks to legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

Batsheva Dance Company and CCN-Ballet de Lorraine are copresented with the Walker Art Center. Kidd Pivot/Electric Company Theatre is presented in cooperation with the U of M Department of Theatre Arts & Dance. Support for *Torrent* is provided by the U of M Dance Program through the Sage Cowles Land Grant Chair.

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MARK JOHNSON, DIRECTING AS WELL AS INSTILLING LIFELONG TRAITS THAT TURN BOYS INTO OUTSTANDING MEN. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MINNESOTA BOYCHOIR

everyone can immediately feel like they can contribute and be a major part of the overall success of the organization. The music is the foundation to building great people. The fact that you sing for yourself, you sing for your brothers on either side of you, and you sing to represent the Minnesota Boychoir is a powerful motivator and common denominator in our community."

The young men on stage come from all walks of life: queer and straight, football players and math team members. And the Boychoir is honored to welcome GLBT families in the community. Deb Horne and Amy Rouillard enrolled their son, Max, when he was seven years old.

"The Boychoir has been a safe and welcoming place for our family. Not only Max, but our whole family has found a place within the organization and celebrate the successes of the choir. Max is growing in confidence and skill, extending himself in new situations musically and theatrically. It has meant seeing him have the opportunity to perform in many different settings and with many different musical groups."

The Boychoir's résumé boasts many accolades. In 2011, members were invited to sing during Mass inside St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican, which requires an elaborate application process. Annual collaborations with the Minnesota Orchestra now dot the calendar: last November, the two groups brought the soundtrack of the classic 1990 movie *Home Alone* to life on stage in downtown Minneapolis.

To celebrate the organization's 55th anniversary next season, choirboys will embark on a 14-day trip to Spain and France. They'll also headline a concert at Orchestra Hall in June 2017. That's in addition to publishing new albums.

Accompanist Todd Price first played alongside choirboys in 1999. He has played piano in the Twin Cities for over 25 years and, to Price, the choir breaks stereotypes and provides unique opportunities to the community.

"While gender roles have certainly shifted in recent decades, most people still don't expect boys to create such beauty. But what sets our community apart is that while everyone auditions, no one is turned away. If the boy wants to sing, regardless of ability, he earns a spot in the choir," Price says. "And when it comes to our audiences, again, all are welcome. There can't be too many other major arts organizations in the state, or even the country, that don't charge for admission."

Price and Johnson not only teach members how to read music and sing with emotion, they instill lifelong traits that turn these boys into outstanding men. Those skills naturally launch members into leadership roles at their respective schools and the rest of their lives.

"I don't remember most of the songs we sang, but I will always remember Mark teaching us how to carry ourselves in public, in different cultures, in our private lives. The Boychoir taught me how to be proud of myself and stand up for my beliefs," van Bruggen said. "The lifelong camaraderie and fellowship that the Boychoir provides is second to none."

That's due to the passion of Mark Johnson. "I need to be a trusted and respected adult in their lives that shows compassion, emotion, interest, and constant support through this sometimes difficult and awkward time in boys' lives," Johnson adds. "There is a palpable power you feel from the piano to the rehearsal seats, from the podium to the choral risers, that we are in this together. We are all doing something we love with people who we love and care about, and that feeling and power leads to even greater music-making and appreciation from those who experience the Minnesota Boychoir."

If music be the food of love, sing on. P

Mike Marcotte is an alum of the Minnesota Boychoir, singing in the organization for seven years. He currently serves on their board of directors.

Members of the Boychoir will perform a free concert on Monday, June 27 at 7 p.m. in Graebner Memorial Chapel on the campus of Concordia University, Saint Paul. The concert concludes the choir's tour of Kansas City. A freewill donation will be collected.

Auditions for the Boychoir's 2016–2017's season take place July 12 and 14, with additional dates August 16–18. Learn more at www.boychoir.org.



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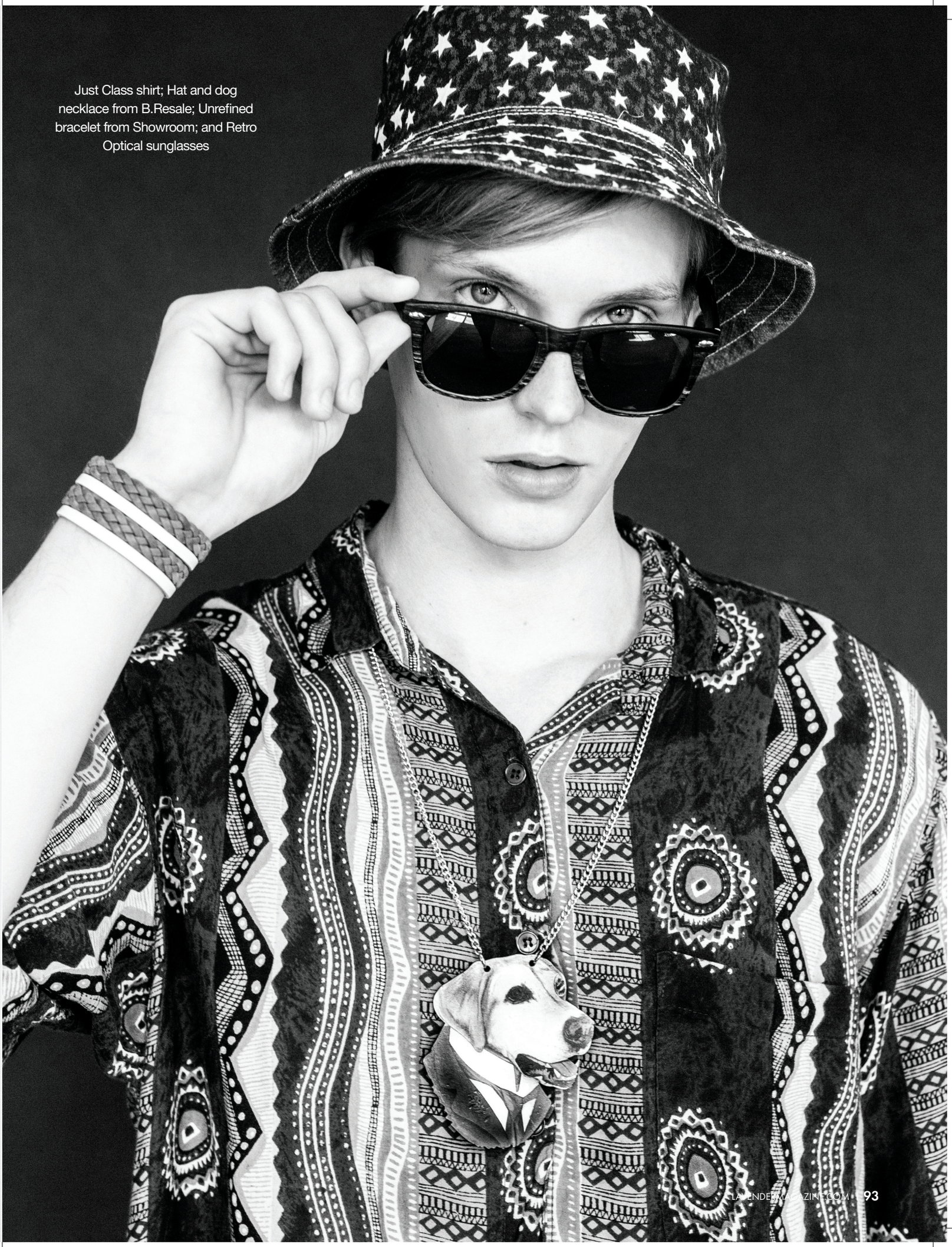


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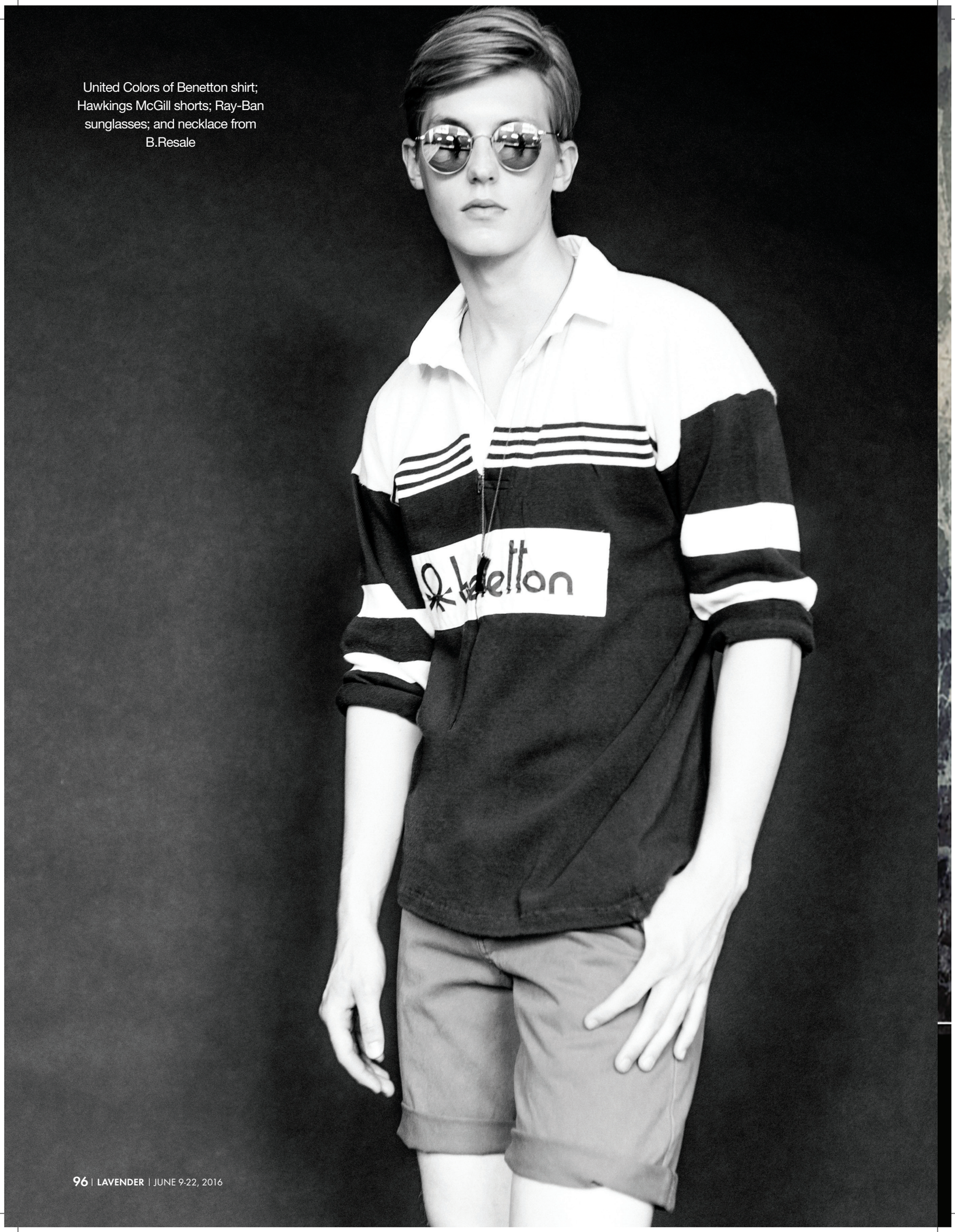
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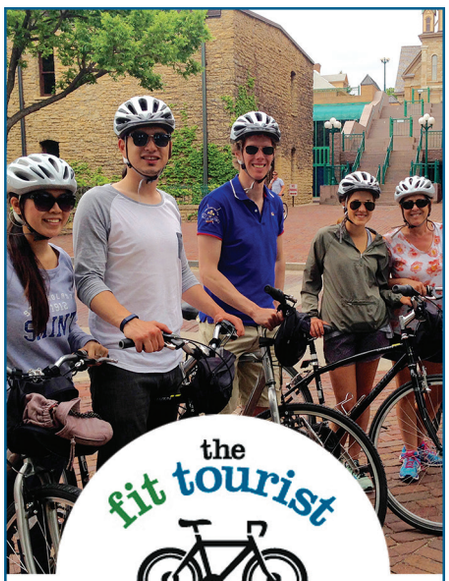
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OUR STYLE

- by Shane Lueck -

Two local businesses draw their inspirations and aesthetic from different sources, but each has something unique to offer the community. Pharmacie and Mona Williams, both relatively new and GLBT-owned, have an ever-evolving stock of products for the discerning buyer.

PHARMACIE

Located on Lyndale Ave., Pharmacie opened in Fall 2013. Couple Sam Beberg and Roger Barrett are both lovers of good design and have always wanted to open a space to showcase that passion. "It's a ton of work, but it's a labor of love for us," Barrett says, who also does Exhibition Design at the Science Museum of Minnesota while Beberg also owns Hot Plate Diner in south Minneapolis.

The name Pharmacie came from the idea of a vintage corner store where you could find a variety of products for life, your home, or a small gift — anything from a bar of soap to a backpack to furnishings. "We've kind of reinterpreted that concept for modern life, but while still keeping that neighborhood character," Barrett says.

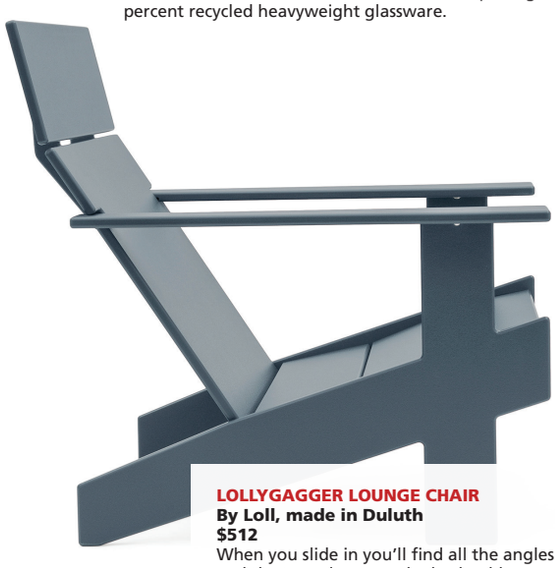
Pharmacie's offerings are focused on carrying small, independent designers and makers (both locally and around the U.S.). Barrett says, "We appreciate the value of humor and wit in life, and many of our products reflect that idea."



CELEBRATION DAY VOTIVE
By Tatine, made in Chicago
$19
This soy 2-oz. candle is part of the Tisane collection, a lyrical interpretation of memories, moments, music, and emotions. Celebration Day offers notes of bittersweet orange blossoms, neroli, and pine bark. Tatine candles are an infusion of essential and perfume oils. This handcrafted, hand-wrapped candle allows for a 16-hour burn time and is packaged in 40 percent recycled heavyweight glassware.



EVAN COMMUTER
By M.R.K.T.
$135
The two-way Evan commuter transforms effortlessly into a unique tote bag to compact backpack with removable straps. Made of felt and vegan leather trip, the Evan commuter bag features a zipped exterior pocket and a removable media pocket that fits a small handheld tablet.



LOLLYGAGGER LOUNGE CHAIR
By Loll, made in Duluth
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When you slide in you'll find all the angles feel just right and the two planes on the back add an unexpected level of comfort. The Lollygagger has an integrated bottle opener hidden underneath the sitter's right arm just in case you get thirsty but don't want to get up. Loll products are made with 100% recycled high-density polyethylene (HDPE) which is the same material as the #2 plastics (i.e. mostly milk jugs) that you take out to the curb every week.



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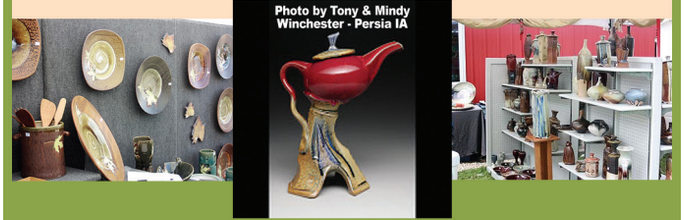


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OUR STYLE
- by Shane Lueck -

MONA WILLIAMS

The University Ave. boutique that curates couture expanded to the Mall of America with a storefront on the first level, between Nordstrom and DSW. Owner Patric Richardson says shoppers can expect more. "There's simply more stuff: a larger selection of the brands that we've already carried and then new brands. There's just more of everything."

When the Kentucky native first came to Minnesota, the very first place Richardson went was the Mall of America. As he shares, people always say go with what you know, and he knows the Mall of America, having worked for 10 years in such positions as women's designer apparel manager at Nordstrom. And as the only store in America featuring some of these brands, he says the Mall of America is the perfect venue, since even though he is excited to introduce these brands to American shoppers, the international crowds will recognize the brands.

"If I was going to open a second store, there is no place more iconic than the Mall of America," he says. "It's fashion on an international scale; there's nothing else like it. It's like having a store in Times Square, or in a Disney park. There's nothing like it. Everyone knows where it is. It's just so cool to be on an international stage."



CHELSEA HOTEL T-SHIRT
By Baum und Pferdgarten
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After watching a Mapplethorpe documentary on the Hotel Chelsea, Richardson is understandably infatuated with the famed (and infamous) hotel. The Danish fashion house Baum und Pferdgarten immortalized the stomping grounds of musicians, writers, artists, and filmmakers in the form of a printed, jersey T-shirt.



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MEDICINAL TOOTHPASTE
By Couto
$16
This medicinal toothpaste played an important role in changing the oral hygiene habits of the Portuguese. Couto toothpaste not only cleans teeth, it disinfects the mouth as well. Thanks to its antiseptic properties it fights mouth infections and inflammatory conditions and prevents cavities. Not tested on animals and not containing any animal products, its formula is more concentrated that other toothpastes.



GLASS FOAM BUFFING STONE
By BrüStone
$18
This Minnesota-based company has created a pumice-like buffing stone made from 100 percent recycled glass beer bottles. But that's not all it's good for. Richardson discovered the stone is also effective in depilling sweaters!

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OUR SCENE
- by Carla Waldemar -



Travel: Dublin
1916 — Happy Days Are Here Again

PHOTO COURTESY OF BIGSTOCK

DUBLIN, IRELAND.

The story of Ireland is a story of migration, both in (Vikings, Normans) and out. But it was domination by the British (the one percenters of the day) that caused the most hardship, culminating in the Rebellion and Civil War. Just as American patriots fought their British rulers for independence in 1776, in Dublin during Easter Week 1916, Irish patriots revolted against British domination too, with a far more tragic outcome. Badly outnumbered, after six days the rebels surrendered and their bold leaders were shot. This year, the Rising of 1916's Centenary is hailed throughout the city with special activities, exhibits and museum launches, focused on "reflecting on the past, re-imagining the future."

Back then, public opinion aligned with the Brits, for many Irish had joined the British Army during World War I. But after a firing squad brutally executed the Rising's 14 leaders, sentiment swung to the rebels' cause, paving the way for the formation of the Irish Free State in 1922.

The Rising has become "the most analyzed seven days in Irish history," declares Bernard, togged out in khaki as we hop aboard a military transport van of the times for a 1916 Freedom Tour (www.1916tour.ie). He unfolds the rebels' original plan to occupy strongholds circling the city, but when only 1,200 hardcore volunteers heeded the call, time for Plan B. We drive by rebels' HQ in the General Post Office, where,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 108



☑ LGBTQI

☑ Christian

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First UMC, Duluth
Good Samaritan UMC, St. Peter
Onamia UMC, Onamia

www.mnrcumc.org

for a brief moment of glory, a green flag (homemade from a blanket) flew until the building — the whole street — was engulfed in flames. The resurrected GPO has opened a new museum tracing the course of the action. The Barracks Museum also has devised a moving exhibit of photos, artifacts (including that green blanket) and last letters of the 14 executed, plus the signed surrender document.

The National Photo Gallery displays photos of the week's assault. The Little Museum of Dublin fills its walls with a cartoon account of Irish history highlighting The Rising. (Other exhibits in this "most visited" of Dublin's museums include a tribute to its idolized band, U2.)

The van delivers us to Kilmainham Gaol, a hellhole for criminals and political prisoners, including those that faced that infamous firing squad. Then it's on to Glasnevin Cemetery (resting place for 1.5 million Dubliners) for its 1916 walking tour. Flowers brighten the gravestones of rebels, British soldiers, and the 500-plus innocents caught in the crossfire. (The cemetery's most-visited grave is that of Michael Collins, hero of the ensuing War of Independence, played by Liam Neesan in the recent film.)

The story continues at the famed Abbey Theater (home of the Guthrie's longtime director Joe Dowling) with its revival of *The Plough and the Stars*, which portrays the Rising's sordid side: looting, cowardice and bystanders' unnecessary deaths. Reviled as unpatriotic at its 1925 debut, today it's hailed as one of playwright Seán O'Casey's masterworks.

Happy Days Are Here Again

But bullets are long gone. The Garda (police) don't even carry guns. Here, they're friendly as your favorite uncle, escorting map-challenged folks like me around its corners. Passers-by, too, pause at the mere rustle of a map to guide me on my path. Dublin is a compact, obsessively friendly, easily walkable city. (Bonus: They all speak English; well, sort of. It's puzzling how "five" can turn into a three-syllable word.)

I'm greeted with "Howya keepin', madam?" when I turn up at O'Donoghue's Bar for its nightly music session. I'm greeted with bear hugs by Tony, concierge at The Fitzwilliam Hotel on St. Stephen's Green, Dublin's favorite park. Once grazing fields for sheep, it was spruced up by the Guinness family, city benefactors as well as providers of its beloved "mothers' milk."

The brewery is Dublin's most-visited attraction. A tour explaining the brewing process climaxes at the rooftop Gravity Bar for a pint and 360-view of the city. Across the Liffey, Old Jameson Distillery competes with a space-needle elevator and tasting room for its cherished whiskey. Here, north of the Liffey, I saunter up O'Connell Street, past the GPO, to the Dublin Writers Museum, with tales of homeboys from Swift to Stoker, from Wilde and Joyce, to Nobel winners Yeats, Shaw, Beckett, and Heaney. Nearby, Hugh Lane Gallery shines with modernists from Monet to Mondrian, including the studio of Francis Bacon, resembling the aftermath of a tornado.

Cross pretty Ha'penny Bridge to the south bank to walk your way through Irish history, starting at the National Museum of Ireland's archaeology branch, with treasures from the Stone Age onward, preserved for centuries in Ireland's peat bogs. That's where they found mummified Clonycavan Man of 200 B.C., complete with his stylishly gelled pompadour. Gaze on the bell of St. Patrick, who brought his religion to Ireland well before the Vikings landed in 800 A.D.

Christ Church Cathedral of 1030, the oldest building in the city, boasts the tomb of Strongbow, the Norman warrior who took over. The renowned dean of its neighbor, St. Patrick's Cathedral, Jonathan (*Gulliver's Travels*) Swift, lies buried beneath its glimmering stained glass. Handel's "Messiah" (the organ he played is on view) was first performed nearby.

Continue to Dublin Castle, seat of English rule for 700 years, and behind it the Chester Beatty Library with its gorgeous cache of illustrated religious books, from early Torahs and Qu'rans to the oldest discovered fragments of the Bible, including Paul's Epistles, written on parchment in 180 A.D. You'll find the revered Book of Kells at Trinity College, where eager students offer campus tours.

If architecture is your passion, Martin Dalton of Architecture Tours Ireland is your man — mine, at least, for a freewheeling romp that starts with the serene Palladian symmetry of St. Stephen's Green, then on to nearby Merrion Square, the 'hood of Georgian aristocracy (Duke of Wellington to Oscar Wilde, whose tart epithets and lounging statue adorn one corner). Informative and opinionated, Martin's eyes dance when pointing to newer additions that blend well with their gracefully aging neighbors, but shoot sparks toward the occasional unfortunate "improvements." We ogle fanlights above the famous painted doors, then trot toward Temple Bar (the city's SoHo) and remains of the ancient Viking Wall.

Bubbly Aoife McElwaine leads a tasty tramp called the Fab Food Trails: eight visits starting with Sheridan, a cheesemonger who regales the excellent quality of Irish milk as we munch on samples. Pepper Pot Cafe, in the posh Powerscourt shopping mecca, offers farm-smoked salmon. After a swig of silky Powers whiskey in the ultra-Victorian Swan Bar (original marble and brass) it's on to George's Street Arcade and a hearty sausage roll, a "guaranteed" hangover cure. Cocoa Atelier provides 20 varieties of handmade chocolates; then a raw oyster down the hatch at Temple Bar Food Market.

Time for some serious eating, and The Shelbourne hotel is a super place to start, from house-cured salmon and Kilmore Quay cod to bread-and-butter pudding. Avenue by Nick Munier, going up-tempo in Temple Bar, swears by its Harty Oysters (and so do I), which made way for scallops atop squash puree with citrus foam; then its famous 60-day dry-aged beef.

Upbeat Fade Street Social does wonders with scallops too, dressing them with smoked salmon and butter mousse. Follow up with its deconstructed granny's Irish stew, showcasing balsamic-endowed fillet with puddles of potato mousse. End the orgy with another bread-and-butter pudding, this one embellished with salted peanut ice cream. Farm, celebrating all things organic, features Irish crab cakes with lime and coriander, sea bass on cauliflower puree, an Irish charcuterie board, and fish pie. Bang Restaurant makes a bang, indeed, with its modern takes on Irish classics, as in oxtail and bone marrow gnocchi, lamb rump and slow-cooked shoulder, and salt march duck breast.

Where's the fish and chips, you ask? Alive and batter-coated at pubs like Wuff on one side of the Liffey and on the other, Davy Byrne's, the pub where Leopold Bloom hangs out in Joyce's famed *Ulysses*. For more Joyce, head to the "dark, gaunt house" of Joyce's aunt that forms the setting of *The Dead*. Owner Brendan Kilty (gregarious, tale-spinning, impractical, passionate, and dreamer in equal measure) saved the house from ruin and serves Joyce-themed dinners (www.jamesjoycehouse.ie) in cahoots with Rory, who anoints himself The Druid Chef. He's cooked for Princess Di, for Michael Jackson, but tonight he's preparing blackened salmon salad and beef medallions for us. "All great literature is Irish," Brendan proclaims, and clearly the greatest of the great is: Joyce. And all great hosts are Irish, too. Come see for yourself! P

GAY DUBLIN

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SPORTS

- by Kathleen Bradbury -

Quidditch

A Full-Contact, Gender-Inclusive Sport for Athletic Muggles

Confession time: How many people, after seeing or reading the *Harry Potter* series, dreamed of zipping around a Quidditch field on a broomstick? How many people have longed to catch the game-winning snitch to the roars of an ecstatic crowd? I'm willing to bet a nice, frosty glass of butterbeer that I'm not the only one.



SILVER PHOENIX VERSUS TC FROST. PHOTO BY NIKKI SMITH

Although most of the magic of Quidditch (a sport played on broomstick in the wildly popular *Harry Potter* series) must remain in our imaginations, an adaptation of the game has moved out of the fantasy world and into our own backyard. That's right, Minnesota is home to three official Quidditch teams registered with United States Quidditch Association (USQ). And for people like Luke Zak from the TC Frost team, Quidditch provides a unique opportunity to play contact sports in a welcoming and inclusive environment.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 112

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Zak describes Quidditch as "a full-contact, mixed-gender sport" that combines elements of dodgeball, football, and rugby into a game of strategy and agility. Each team contains three Chasers who attempt to score points by getting the "quaffle" ball through hoops guarded by a Keeper. Two Beaters throw "bludgers" to disrupt other players (like dodgeball). And one Seeker attempts to capture a human "Snitch" that sprints around the field attempting to avoid capture. All of this rigorous play is done with each player holding a broom between their legs. Though the broomsticks don't provide any magical advantage, they do create more of a physical challenge that people have to learn to work around.

If you're unfamiliar with Quidditch, the game may initially sound very confusing or even chaotic. But Zak assures, "It's easy to follow along even though there are several aspects of gameplay." In fact, while the sport initially gained popularity with fans of the fictional series, a large portion of players are drawn to the game without any previous obsession with the wizarding world. Zak adds, "It's a very athletic game. It's competitive and getting enough exposure that more people are picking it up."

Anyone, regardless of gender or age, can play the physically demanding sport. In fact, gender inclusivity has been a key component of the USQ's mission statement from its inception in 2010, a stance that strongly differs from many traditional sports. Even better, USQ backs up their belief in gender inclusivity with an effort called Title 9 ¾, an advocacy branch that ensures all teams are living up to the league's standards of gender inclusivity. (Title 9 ¾ is a witty homage to both Title IX and the Platform number for the Hogwarts Express.)

The Quidditch teams in the *Harry Potter* series are made up of the best players regardless of gender, and this is the reigning policy for USQ leagues as well. The USQ notes, "When all genders are able to compete equally on the pitch, they will learn to respect and value each other's abilities regardless of gender identity." Additionally, the policy also pushes against traditional notions of the binary gender system by respecting and acknowledging trans individuals and people who don't identify with the gender binary.

This commitment to gender inclusivity is written into the rules through the "four maximum rule," which strives to make sure all genders are represented on the field. Zak explains, "At any time on the field, you're going to have six players out there. No more than four players that identify as the same gender are allowed to play at one time." The mandatory rule recognizes gender as the players identify, allowing each member to feel safe and validated on the team.

Due to the inclusive nature of the sport, Zak believes that many GLBT people like himself are drawn to Quidditch: "GLBT athletes aren't always out or open in sports, but there's definitely a different community within the Quidditch league that provides safe spaces for people to play." This safe space may even give some athletes their first safe opportunity to be involved in a sport, due either to discrimination based on gender identity or sexuality. Zak stresses that Quidditch allows people to focus more on the sport than any other peripheral issue: if you can play the game, you're allowed to play, no matter who you are.

As Captain of TC Frost, Zak finds Quidditch to be "an incredible outlet to push myself physically and mentally." Preparing for a Quidditch game is a large time commitment. During the tournament season, TC Frost practices three times per week. In the practices, players run drills to increase agility, perform physicality exercises to step up against aggressive teams, and discuss gameplay strategies.

On top of all the training, TC Frost attends three or four matches and then closes out their season with a regional tournament. Even though their most recent national tournament ended in a loss, Zak was extremely proud of TC Frost for its performance. He adds, "Being in such a competitive environment and developing good sportsmanship has helped me make a lot of lifelong friends."

Since TC Frost is an adult community team, they occasionally hold open summer practices and pick-up Quidditch games so more people can join in on the fun. In the fall, the team will select their competitive traveling roster. To get involved with TC Frost, check them out on Facebook (www.facebook.com/tcfrostquidditch) or on Twitter @TC_Frost. Be sure to check out the USQ league at www.usquidditch.org.



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SPORTS
- by Nell Gelhaus -

"Mac" is Back

At the Courts at Mayo Clinic Square, Janel McCarville is ready to sit down. Having just completed a three-hour practice, the Lynx finished their morning with a grueling conditioning session. McCarville paired up with Sylvia Fowles, pushing through a series of drills that included resistance bands and individual leg squats that looked exhausting even to watch.



PHOTO BY DAVID SHERMAN/GETTY IMAGES

After a season off from the WNBA, McCarville is making every practice count. She was allowed only two days to get up to speed upon returning from overseas, where she played in the Turkish women's premier basketball league (KBSL) in Kayseri. There are new plays to learn and new teammates to get to know.

Questions swirled last summer when the Lynx announced McCarville wouldn't be playing. Was she hurt? Or, like Diana Taurasi of the Phoenix Mercury, was she saving herself for a more lucrative overseas league? See-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 116

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ing her sitting courtside at most Lynx home games last summer prompted excited chatter amongst the fans, who wondered about her presence in a chair and not on the court.

McCarville says the wear and tear of over 10 years of playing professional basketball finally caught up with her.

"After having played with the Lynx for two years and then oversees after both of those seasons [without a break] I was kind of worn down. My back had been giving me problems and my knee had been giving me problems and I was leaving practices in China in tears because it was to the point where I couldn't even stand up straight. Obviously they want me on the court and they were pushing me to play. I mean, mind, body and soul, I was struggling. So I needed the time off."

Staying healthy is McCarville's biggest challenge at this point in her career, and requires continuous extra effort. Post-games, while everyone else enjoys celebratory beers or goes home to rest, she's spending extra time working out her back and hamstrings. This may be part of the reason why she's comfortable in her new role as support for starter Sylvia Fowles and Rebekkah Brunson. She's prepared to step in when called upon.

"If Sylvia's out to dominate, I'm not sitting on the bench pouting. I'm engaged and having fun. I *want* to sit on the bench and have her do well. And cheer and be a fan. I want to be able to step into my role and let her catch her breath and fix her head or whatever needs to happen to get back into the game and continue to dominate."

After her summer sabbatical, McCarville made it clear that the Lynx were the only team she'd consider playing for. Not only did she have loyalty to the team with whom she'd won the 2013 WNBA Championship, but Minnesota is closest to her hometown of Stevens Point, WI. It's obvious from the way she describes her connection to her family and the 160-acre hobby farm where she grew up, with cows, pigs, chickens, ducks, and pheasants, that "home" is a priority. In fact, she was disappointed that an upcoming game would cause her to miss cow vaccinations with her family.

"My father and family still come to the games. I have friends in the area. I have the ability to be home. I was home yesterday. I am missing vaccinations for the cows this weekend! I am pissed! I enjoy that stuff."

Home is where she eventually plans on building a house, on the 20 acres she was given by her parents along with her other four siblings when they divided up the farm. Home is what made her who she is, both the basketball player and the person.

"I loved basketball from the start. I mean nobody in my family played it, my parents didn't understand it. My father still has no idea what's going on. I got a basketball for a present — Christmas, birthday, something — and I remember sleeping with that damn thing. My mom bought just a hoop at a rummage sale for a buck fifty, no backboard. I think we nailed it to the barn. You gotta make your own fun. I remember my father grabbing a chair, sitting outside 20 feet away from me, drinking beer, just watching me shoot. I was making some, missing some. But I was having fun and he was having fun. And that's kinda how I grew up to like it."

McCarville's three older brothers would challenge her to games of H.O.R.S.E., until she began to win. "So that kind of got old for them, getting dominated by your younger sister."

Everything she's learned, even the exceptional passing she's known for, was self-taught. Without the money for the basketball camps and private lessons so many other pro athletes grew up with, McCarville had to improvise.

"I've grown up playing on a slab that was probably 10 feet by 20 feet long and the concrete was all uneven, jagged. The ball was bouncing in different directions when it went down. I kind of got accustomed to handling shitty situations. With the barn on the one side of that concrete, I would throw behind-the-back passes off the barn, catch it and shoot it. I was like my own passer, rebounder, and assister all in one."

The Lynx have started the season strong, and McCarville already has the start of a 2016 highlight reel, with a falling-to-the-ground, behind-the-back assist to Renee Montgomery making the rounds online. Google it. The play almost rivals the 2013 finals highlight of McCarville running out of bounds, and passing behind, no-look, between-the-legs to a teammate for an easy layup. Awareness is instinctual for her.

"I have great players around me. They know what they should do, so for me it's just putting the ball in position for them to do something with it. I looked before at the three-point line and saw she was coming, so I knew she would continue to come. That was all. I would rather make someone look good than score two points."

Though McCarville was a force to be reckoned with in high school, it wasn't until her college career with the Gophers (with teammate Lindsay Whalen) that she realized she might be able to play professionally. For girls with similar dreams, she says, "If you want to play, play. Do what you can do. Practice. Don't let anybody hold you back. You know I'm kind of the proof for that in the aspect that I come from a farm. I never went to camps. I didn't have the money for it. I was wearing raggedy shoes. I liked it. I wanted to play. I didn't let anybody stop me and when I got the chance I balled out. [That] carried over into my life as well."

In addition to being a positive presence on the court, McCarville, who is gay, also has been a positive influence for the GLBT community just by her mere openness. She considers herself active in the GLBT community, though not an activist. GLBT Lynx fans have long cheered extra loud when she plays. McCarville herself is a little oblivious to the attention.

"Alright! I didn't know I had a crew!"

Her approachability has led to a healthy Twitter and Instagram following and she says she always attempts to respond. Certainly she'll gain plenty of new followers this season, especially during Pride week. By the way, she's single. Good luck, ladies. And you better like farm animals.



PHOTO BY DAVID SHERMAN/GETTY IMAGES



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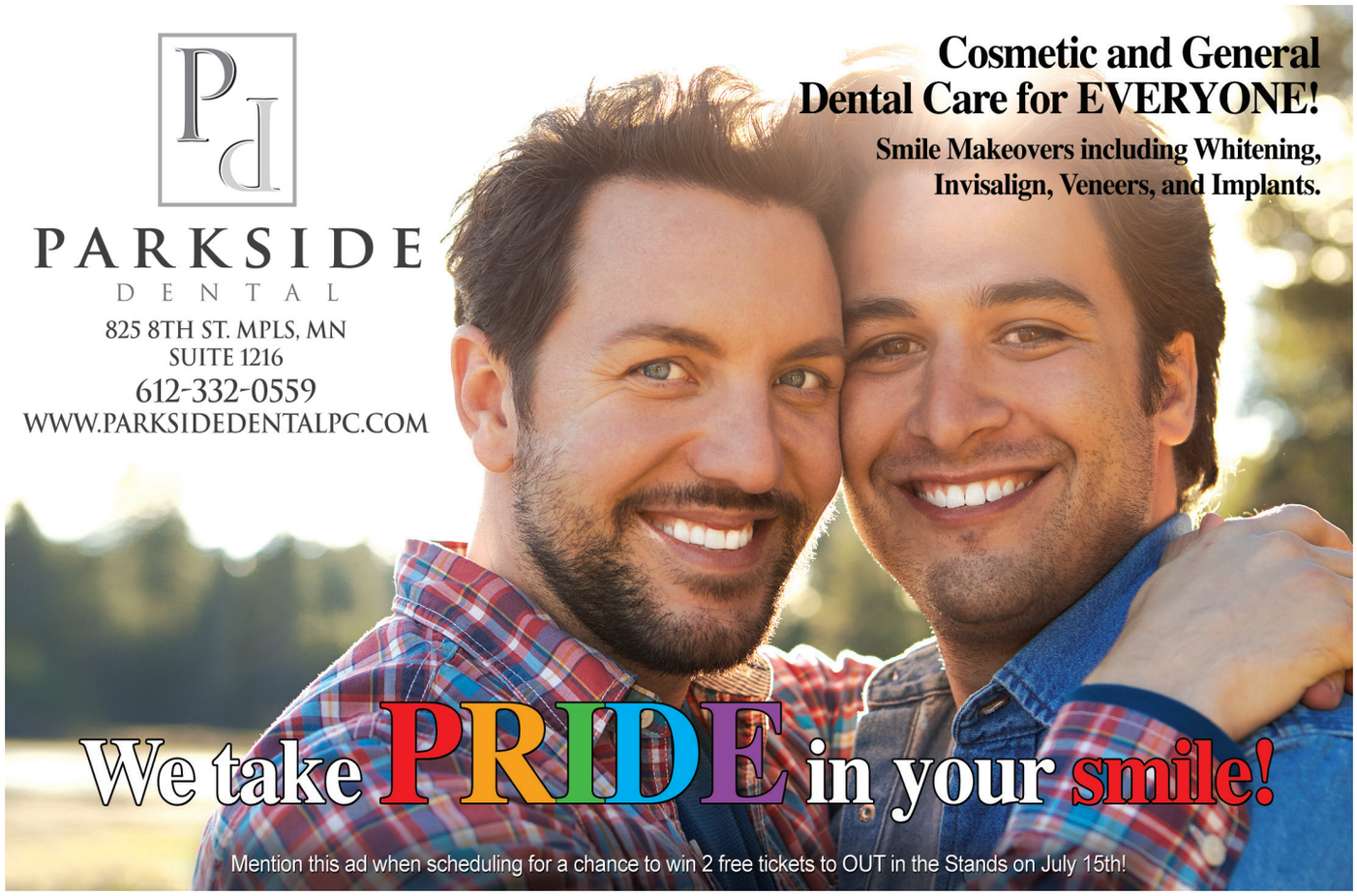


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SPORTS

- by Kathleen Bradbury -

Silver Fox League Gets Women Over 40 in the Game

Thanks to Title IX, the opportunities available for female athletes in 2016 are undeniably more prevalent than ever. Young women have the chance to participate on athletic teams and even pursue athletic careers, making female involvement in sports a more common occurrence. Although these considerable advancements undeniably help future female athletes, there are fewer opportunities for women over 40 to step away from the sidelines. Add this to the potential age bias women may face when joining younger athletic teams, and the chances to play ball seem pretty slim. But through the Silver Fox Basketball League at the Minneapolis YWCA, women over 40 have the opportunity to get out of the bleachers and into center court.



SILVER FOX BASKETBALL LEAGUE. PHOTOS COURTESY OF YWCA MINNEAPOLIS

CONTINUED ON PAGE 120

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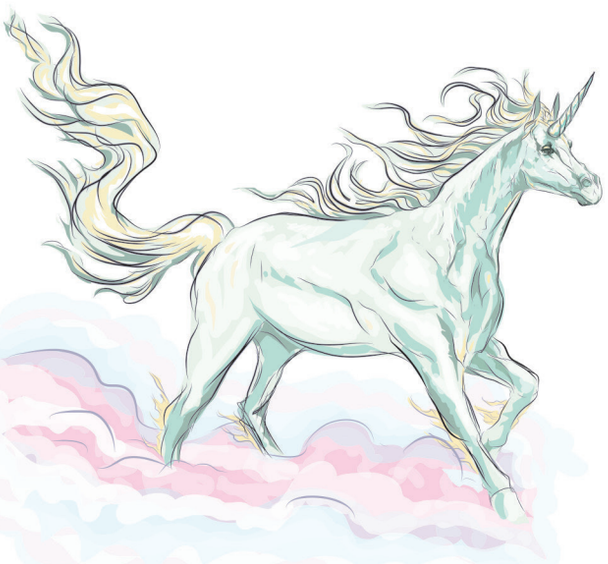
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SILVER FOX BASKETBALL LEAGUE.

The Silver Fox League was formed in 2005 in order to give women over 40 the opportunity to play basketball. Organized by the YWCA of Minneapolis, the league holds weekly games during their season at the Midtown YMCA/Minneapolis Sports Center. Though the games can get pretty competitive, the league provides a welcoming atmosphere for women to bond through their love of basketball.

Catherine Gray (fondly known by her teammates as Coky) is one player who has found extreme joy and community through the Silver Fox League. A loyal participant since 2005, Coky discovered the league when she was approaching 50 years old. Joining a team allowed Coky to continue her love of sports, which started at a very young age. As a current member of the Sole Sisters, Coky's time on the court is a nice respite from a busy life: "For me, this league is all about fitness and fun," she adds.

Typically comprised of 8–10 teams, the league is split into two different levels in order to allow all interested players the opportunity to get on the court. Players on A teams tend to have more basketball experience, while B teams are often a better fit for the rookies. Coky emphasizes, "It's really important for people to understand that it is for all levels; some players have played high-level ball, and some have barely (or never) played. But there seems to be a team for everyone!"

Indeed, everyone is welcome to join the league, including people in the GLBT community. Coky estimates that half her team (including herself) identifies as GLBT and believes many other queer women enjoy participating in the league because of the inclusive environment. She believes this "welcoming atmosphere is largely because of the women we have in this league; they are all very welcoming. If a newcomer comes in, she will find a team."

One unique part of being on an over-40 team is that players sometimes have to readjust their expectations for their abilities. According to Coky, one of the biggest challenges for players occurs "when they come in with a memory of how they used to play. Your body doesn't work the way it did when you were 20, and if you try to play the way you did back then, you can get frustrated or hurt." Instead of holding onto past levels of ability, Coky encourages people to take it easy at first and discover what their bodies can currently do. Even Coky admits, "I've had to check my ego at the door and really just have fun."

The benefits of continuing physical activity beyond age 40 are numerous, but on added benefit for Coky is that she is able to build a community around such a fun activity: "It's fulfilling for us who play and participate because it connects us with people who we otherwise wouldn't meet." Indeed, the league provides an opportunity for women to bond through physical activity, which Coky notes is often structured as a solo activity with limited interaction.

For Coky, the most important benefit she experiences from the league is that it's just plain fun. She explains, "People might first think of fitness, but I'm going to go with fun. Everyone I know works really hard in their lives, but this is just super fun." The Silver Foxes may play as hard as they work, but the real joy lies in their love for the game, a love that will keep Coky on the court for many years to come. Coky encourages any interested women to join in on the fun by contacting her at Catherine@ohmyfilms.com or league coordinator Tanysha Scott at tscott@ywcampls.org.



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OUR LIVES
- by Kathleen Bradbury -

PRIDE Institute
Celebrates 30 Years of Service to GLBT Community

For the past 30 years, PRIDE Institute has been a mainstay for the GLBT community in Minnesota. As the first "stand-alone substance abuse treatment center in the nation exclusively created to serve the LGBTQ community," PRIDE Institute provides some of the most important support our community receives. For many members of the queer community, PRIDE Institute is to thank for the recovery and well-being of their loved ones and themselves.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE PRIDE INSTITUTE

Molly Gilbert, PRIDE Institute's director of business development, recounts the significance of the center's establishment in 1986: "We were initially created to be a safe space for the community to get well together amid the nation's AIDS crises. Through our history we have learned that nothing equals the safety of being surrounded by others who 'get' you." Their sole focus on the queer community ensures that people get the specific help they need while acknowledging the distinct experiences and issues GLBT people may have.

When people are struggling with substance abuse, it may seem like any treatment center is going to solve the problem. Gilbert explains, "I can't tell you the number of times clients come to us after having attended an 'LGBT friendly' treatment center, or some place that claimed to offer an 'LGBT track' only to find that they met once per week as the 'token LGBT people' within a largely heterosexual environment." This outsider experience can impede the success of people struggling with homophobia (internalized or

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societal) and issues of gender or sexuality.

But for the queer community, the tailored treatment provided by PRIDE Institute sets their programs apart from other organizations. According to Gilbert, "Offering clients a safe environment in which to confront their substance abuse and the unique stressors they face as LGBTQ+ individuals living in a heterosexist society makes us inherently unique from all heteronormative treatment programs."

PRIDE Institute also helps its participants address any unresolved issues about their identities due to the importance of honesty throughout the recovery process: "When clients are able to be open and honest about their authentic self, they are then able to focus solely on their recovery. After all, if it is OK to keep one's sexuality a secret, then why not keep one drink or one pill a secret, too? At PRIDE Institute, honesty is a key to recovery."

An additional benefit to PRIDE Institute's recovery program is their Sexual Health Program, defined as "an intensive, clinically based program designed to cover the broad spectrum of sex and sexuality-related issues that often co-present with substance abuse." Covering issues of sexual obsession, compulsive sexual behavior, and safe sex practices, PRIDE Institute addresses common links between substance abuse and sexual activity in order to help their patients fully recover.

There are several other ways that PRIDE Institute is designed to specifically support the GLBT community. For example, the staff consists of mostly out and proud members of the community, allowing for more recognition and respect of a queer person's journey. And while the 12-Step program influences their treatment methods, PRIDE Institute offers alternative recovery plans for people who may not feel comfortable with the spiritual components of 12-Step.

Through its various treatment programs, PRIDE Institute estimates that they have had over 14,000 graduates since they opened their doors. For people who cannot make it to the Minnesota locations, PRIDE Institute also helps connect queer people with the best resources in their area to address their needs. Additionally, the business development team travels across the nation to help train healthcare providers and treatment centers in how to care for the GLBT community's needs.

As former graduates from the program can attest, the support PRIDE Institute gives its participants doesn't stop once they check out of treatment. Gilbert explains, "Being surrounded by members of our own community, clients have a unique opportunity to start to create their own chosen family who will continue to support them in their new, sober life."

The PRIDE Institute wants to remind our community that Pride season does not have be about getting wasted: "Celebrating ourselves can be done with self-respect, dignity, and yes, it can be done sober." There are many sober-affirming events planned over Pride, such as the Fruit Bowl at Memory Lanes in Minneapolis on Friday, June 24. Gilbert adds, "It's a great way to start off the Pride weekend with family, friends, and little ones, with positive examples of members in the community having sober fun."

Gilbert encourages anyone with concerns about substance abuse to reach out to PRIDE. "Not all people who are LGBTQ+ need to go to PRIDE Institute to get sober. But those truly struggling with internalized shame, trauma and internalized homonegativity really do need a place like PRIDE. Give us a call if you have questions about yourself or a loved one; we will do everything we can to help you."

To thank PRIDE Institute for their dedicated work, or to learn more about how they help our community, visit www.pride-institute.com.



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Moving Beyond Weight:
Redefining Health and Body Image

It's a common scenario. I'm at the doctor's office for a routine check up. The perky nurse leads me to the exam room with a pit stop at the scale. After years of chastisement about my weight, I'm relatively prepared for what's coming. "Shoes on or off?" I ask bemusedly, dropping my purse and removing my coat. The nurse tells me it is my preference, but then she sighs and says, "The scale never gives us good news. No one feels good about stepping on the scale."





IMAGES COURTESY OF THE EMILY PROGRAM FOUNDATION

Maybe she meant to prepare me for what she perceived to be a disappointing moment in my day, a moment where I saw numerical proof of how much I've failed. Maybe she meant to reassure me that I'm not alone, that I belong to a universal club: The Society of People Who Are Perpetually Dissatisfied With Their Bodies. Or maybe she's just repeating what many of us have been told our whole lives, that we should never feel good about our weight.

Regardless of the intentions behind this casual body-shaming, the nurse's sentiment sheds light on a pervasive problem that is so engrained within our society that most people don't even realize it; we place a heavy emphasis on our weight, often to the point where we misconstrue the connection between weight and health.

The idea that our weight is not fully representative of our health is not new. Many body image activists and doctors have been suggesting this for years, pointing to research that proves many weight-health correlations are inaccurate. And yet, many people struggle to separate the number on the scale from their self-worth, leading to unbalanced relationships with food, exercise, and body image. So why is it so hard to disconnect the perceived link between weight and health?

Billie Gray, Ph.D., executive director of The Emily Program Foundation, suggests a few reasons behind our society's preoccupation with weight. First, Gray notes that people prefer to focus on weight because "it's easy to measure — it's harder to measure health." While it's hard to measure and monitor something like cholesterol, weight is something people can see and attempt to fix. Gray adds the "pull yourself up by your bootstraps" mentality of our individualistic society adds to our assumptions that we can always control and improve ourselves, starting with that number on the scale.

Focusing on weight can give people a sense of control as well, especially when other aspects of life can't be controlled. But improvements based on weight loss are more likely to fail than succeed in the long run. Gray notes, "We know that weight loss is not sustainable…80–95 percent of people who lose weight will regain, sometimes even more than they lost, and yet we keep prescribing weight loss. Are there any other medical interventions that doctors prescribe that have a 95 percent failure rate and yet they keep prescribing them?" This high failure rate for weight loss also encourages perpetual dieting and self-monitoring, potentially leading to obsessive behaviors.

And it's easy to go beyond self-monitoring and slip into evaluating other people's weight based on their appearance. Gray adds that the focus on weight also allows people to make judgments on a person's personality and values based simply on their physical appearance: "We think we know how much they exercise or if they exercise. We think we know what their eating habits are like, that they eat a lot of junk food or fast food. We think we know about their personality, that they lack willpower, that they're lazy. We think we know all these things, but we don't."



These instances of size bias are prevalent even within the GLBT community, a community that is supposed to be welcoming and affirming to an extremely broad range of people with different body types, genders, and expressions. From assumptions based on size to excluding people based on "harmless" preferences for specific body types, the queer community is also implicated in fueling the obsession with weight and health.

The need to fit in with idealized body images is especially prevalent among gay males, a demographic that (according to the National Eating Disorders Association, or NEDA) makes up only five percent of the male population in the United States but accounts for 42 percent of U.S. men with eating disorders. While this number accounts for diagnosed cases, it does not even begin to cover the amount of people within the GLBT community who experience body dissatisfaction that manifests in some sort of disordered eating, disordered exercise, or body image issue.

In addition to anxieties surrounding weight and size, the fear of being "unhealthy" encourages many of us to immerse ourselves into grueling fitness regimens or strict eating habits, all in the belief that a healthy lifestyle will help us lose weight, improve our health, and solve all our other body image issues. But are diets that demonize or eliminate whole food groups healthy? Is it healthy to approach exercise with a "no pain no gain" mindset? Where's the tipping point between healthy and obsessive?

Many people assume that diets promoting organic foods or "clean eating" are fostering positive habits that lead to overall wellness, and many people are able to follow their preferences in a balanced and mindful manner. But these eating guidelines can easily slide into obsessive territory for someone who is a perfectionist or who leans toward all-or-nothing mentalities. Taken to an extreme, even an organic or raw food diet could develop into an issue. Recently, a form of disordered eating called orthorexia has become more prevalent, where someone restricts food intake based on the food's perceived health value, quality, or purity. According to NEDA, people who develop orthorexia may assume they are following a healthy diet, but their eating patterns eventually become all-consuming and severely impact their day-to-day lives.

In a society that values extremes and ultimatums, especially around food and exercise, it can be very difficult to articulate what healthy actually means. The many different messages about health from the media and the health industry also make it hard to develop a complete understanding of health. Gray warns, "An advertiser's number one goal is to make you dissatisfied with yourself or your life so you'll go buy or do what they want you to do, and that will supposedly increase your satisfaction." Therefore, the underlying motive behind health-related messages may be more about making a profit and less about an individual's well-being.

Gray encourages people to be cautious of how the media defines health and suggests that people look at health in a more individual and holistic way. A more accurate and safe way to think about health considers the unique needs of the individual, emphasizes a strong connection between physical and mental health, and reflects on the motives or intentions behind behavioral patterns.

Considering health as an individual journey, Gray suggests that people think of health more as "self care, which is about listening to yourself and what you need." When people develop positive relationships with food, body, and fitness, they account for personal preferences and don't resist natural preferences based on perceived societal opinion. Gray also notes that a stable relationship with food is flexible: "Sometimes you're eating for comfort, sometimes for celebration. Food can equal love. Eating can also be out of hunger or convenience. It's all these things."

Additionally, a more holistic definition of health considers the correlation between body and mind. "Mental health and physical health are not separate, they are interwoven. We are actually diminishing people's health by focusing on their weight," Gray adds. Instead of attempting to fix the physical body and hope the mental problems associated with body dissatisfaction or low self-esteem will be solved, the better strategy is to promote acceptance and encourage radical self love in the current moment — a moment that is not contingent on past failures or future success.

Finally, an integral component to defining health is the ability to reflect on the motives fueling certain behaviors. Although diets and exercise regimens are not all destined to end up in dangerous or unsafe territory, it's important for everyone to consider what's behind their relationships to

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food, exercise, and body image. Gray encourages people to challenge assumptions about the perceived safety or value of "healthy lifestyles" by questioning the motives behind participation: are you following a diet that encourages self-righteous thinking about perceived qualities of food? If any behaviors are accompanied with judgment, resistance, or anxiety (or if they become invasive into everyday life), Gray believes there might be cause for concern.

While redefining health and challenging society's ingrained assumptions about bodies will take some time, there are several ways to start practicing self care and foster positive relationships with food, exercise, and body image. Gray offers some tips on how to nurture radical self-acceptance:

Eliminate the word "should" from your vocabulary. Often, "should statements" (such as "I should go to the gym") are imposed by external constructs and frequently are shaming statements. Instead, Gray suggests trying to "replace 'should' with 'I want' or 'I don't want' — then you're listening to your internal voice."

Allow yourself to play, be curious, and even fail. Allow yourself to move your body in ways that are fun instead of seeing exercise as purely for fitness or punishment for not having the body you think you should have. Try new things where you give yourself room to fail.

Think about and celebrate what you can do in your current body. Thank your body for what it has done — think about how well our bodies actually serve us. Gray notes, "Gratitude is a great antidote to shame!"

Challenge yourself and set intentions (more flexible than goals) that are not based on weight or size.

Gray encourages people to "listen to their body of the day; that acknowledges that some days we have more energy, feel stronger, or feel more attractive. Honor where you are in that moment."

It's not easy to challenge assumptions about weight and health, especially because negative mindsets are engrained into us our whole lives. But the more we resist the messages that equate our physical bodies with our self worth, the more we can encourage ourselves and others to find joy in our current bodies. Imagine defining health in a way that moves beyond the scale, beyond shame and unattainable expectations, and toward a place of self care. By promoting mindful behavior and positive relationships with food, exercise, and our bodies, we can begin to challenge our society's obsession with weight and eventually smash the scale that has attempted to sum up our worth in pounds and ounces.

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- by Kathleen Bradbury -



Things No One Tells You About Lesbian Pregancy:

A Non-Bio Mom-To-Be's Experience with the Miracle of Life

It's 10 a.m. on St. Patrick's Day when I get the call. Our fertility clinic has the results of my wife Krissy's pregnancy test. Is this going to be our lucky day?

Affirmative.

Nothing could prepare me for the cliché rush of sheer joy, disbelief, and terror I experienced as I realized that we were finally pregnant. Upon receiving our happy news, we tried to guard our secret until we felt it was safe to share, not wanting to jinx our chances at a healthy pregnancy. But now we are past the first trimester and can finally share our joy. Baby Bradbury will join our family in late November — perfect timing for lots of future Thanks-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 132

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giving jokes and turkey puns. (Yes, these exist. Don't tempt me.)

Krissy and I have done our research on "what to expect" as best as we can, but a pregnancy involving two ladies has definitely had its surprises. I would have never expected to be mixing and administering fertility shots in multiple parking lots around the Twin Cities. Nor would I ever have anticipated some of the hilarious awkward questions we've received from people who have never encountered a non-hetero pregnancy. But along the way, I've learned a great deal about the ins and outs of supporting a partner through the fertility process and first trimester. And in honor of our child's Thanksgiving arrival, I'd like to share a cornucopia of lessons I've learned.

Finding a great fertility clinic is one of the most important steps to beginning the journey to motherhood. There are several great clinics around the cities that are welcoming to GLBT clients, but our temporary home in Central Minnesota made things a bit more difficult. After extensive research, we decided to try The Midwest Center for Reproductive Health in Maple Grove. Conveniently located on Krissy's way to work, it would make getting to all the countless appointments a bit easier.

We were prepared to shop around a bit for a clinic, as both Krissy and I trust our gut reactions when it comes to big decisions. But when we met Dr. Corfman and heard his detailed fertility experience, we knew we had chosen the right clinic. Entrusting the future of your family into the hands of a doctor can be a very vulnerable feeling, but I felt good knowing Krissy was in good hands.

Even though we had science on our side, we quickly learned that the success of the fertility process is really out of our control. We had wrongly assumed that we would get pregnant on the first try because we were the happiest couple in the universe. But trying to conceive has a funny way of humbling you into realizing that the gift of a baby is not so simply acquired. It didn't matter that we desperately wanted a child or that we had invested a great deal of time and money into making it happen. Pregnancy doesn't just happen to couples based on their merit or their love for each other. Even having a fantastic medical team and the precision developed through the wonders of science can't guarantee a successful pregnancy. It just happens.

EVEN THOUGH WE HAD SCIENCE ON OUR SIDE, WE QUICKLY LEARNED THAT THE SUCCESS OF THE FERTILITY PROCESS IS REALLY OUT OF OUR CONTROL. WE HAD WRONGLY ASSUMED THAT WE WOULD GET PREGNANT ON THE FIRST TRY BECAUSE WE WERE THE HAPPIEST COUPLE IN THE UNIVERSE.

Like many other couples who are trying to conceive, we became very familiar with the "Two Week Wait" period. We'd go in for the insemination (which honestly was like a glorified turkey baster situation), I'd joke with the nurses that we had to stop meeting this way, and then we'd go home to twiddle our thumbs for two weeks. We'd try not to get our hopes up too much, but each procedure made us more certain (and more desperate) that it would finally stick.

But on each "maybe baby" day, Krissy would receive a "not pregnant" voicemail that would make us feel completely helpless. I empathized for my beautiful partner, who was willingly pumping herself full of fertility drugs and experiencing all their not-so-pleasant side effects without any success. But I couldn't fully comprehend what she was going through. As we geared up for our sixth and final try, I tried to be supportive and reassure her that she was doing everything right.

Our final insemination was bittersweet. We both felt an overwhelming desperation for the procedure to work, but we tried to balance our hopeful feelings with the reality of our past fertility failures. With so much at stake for this last attempt, the only acceptable way to approach it was with a sense of humor, so we goofed around and teased each other as we waited to be done.

Thanks to the luck-o-the-Irish (or maybe the Irish heritage of our anonymous donor?), March 17th was the day our "maybe baby" became a "definitely." There's still no rhyme or reason for why it finally worked for us, especially when so many lesbian couples have waited so much longer, but we are wholeheartedly grateful for our blessing.

Having our status switch to full-blown, officially pregnant mode made the research geek in me go searching for information on being a supportive partner, with very underwhelming results. Many pregnancy books acknowledge a non-hetero partner at some point with a tasteful aside, but the significant differences in, well, everything, make some information hard to swallow.

If we are to believe the pregnancy guides geared toward dads-to-be, most men have an insultingly low knowledge of basic sex education and how to interact with women. With advice along the lines of "you are going to have to do some housework, Dad," and "Don't touch her boobs if they hurt," the suggestions for supporting a woman through her pregnancy seemed to be geared toward neanderthals with no common sense. Thanks, but no thanks.

As much as I would love a detailed instruction manual for being the best support for my pregnant wife, I'm never going to get it. That's okay though, because I don't really need it. I just need to continue to follow the vows I made on our wedding day: I promised to love her and cherish her presence in my life. I promised to respect and honor her life's journey and support her as she grows. And I promised to welcome her each day with open arms and an open heart, no strings attached. Simply put, being a supportive partner during pregnancy means being present, open, and flexible. No special "advice for dudes" needed.

Even after the positive pregnancy test (and several follow-up tests to reassure my naturally cynical mind), I still had trouble accepting our pregnancy was real. It didn't matter that Krissy was experiencing full-blown pregnancy symptoms; I could not be fully convinced that a baby was actually growing. Dozens of times each day, I asked Krissy if she still felt pregnant. Even after that question got a bit obsessive, Krissy always reassured me that this baby is here to stay.

Much to my surprise, many people struggle to fully accept their partner's pregnancy until there is undeniable proof of life. When I talked to other non-bio moms, they also recalled feeling uncertain and overprotective in the early months. We can't feel what's going on inside our partners' bodies, and the lack of visible evidence is unsettling.

For me, my mom-to-be status finally sunk in when we saw our first sonogram, a sight that instantly brought tears to my eyes. And even after hearing the heartbeat at subsequent check-ups, I'm still not prepared for how humbling and awesome it is to hear proof that our baby is doing well. Though I'm not the one giving birth, I feel more like a mother every single day.

No books or mommy blogs could prepare me for this wonderful adventure Krissy and I are on. No amount of advice could have helped me anticipate the range of emotions I feel as I watch my wife go through this timeless rite of passage. But the little moments that have surprised us have also brought us closer together, and we are honored to join the thousands of other queer parents in raising children who know they are fiercely wanted and so profoundly loved. P



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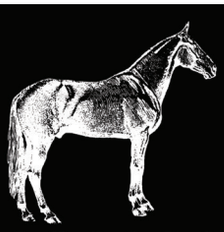
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The Stonewall Moment

I recently had the opportunity to go to Stonewall, finally. I wanted to stand in that place where our GLBT civil rights movement began; to actually *be* in that building. I tried to imagine *being* in that moment in June of 1969.

Going inside Stonewall helped me to realize what it must have been like. It's a small, rectangular bar. At the time there was only one way out: the front door. The police raided the bar whenever the mafia, which owned Stonewall, hadn't paid off the police lately. It was the only bar in the city where GLBT people could actually dance together. When a payoff hadn't been made for a while, the police would remind the mafia to do so by raiding. There was no way out for the people trapped inside.

I tried to imagine what it would be like to be trapped in that bar on that warm June night. You're having fun in the safest place, the only place, you could be yourself, be among your own people, the only place in New York City where GLBT people could actually touch in a public place. In a flash, the bright white lights are turned on to signal a raid. If you were touching someone while dancing, you dropped your hands.

Angry shouts filled the room telling you to line up with your ID. Any male in women's clothing was always arrested. Anyone who didn't have an ID was always arrested. Everyone was shamed. Shame was the real weapon used to keep down the GLBT community. Not just police, but pastors and parents used it too. One individual there that night said he was so afraid that his picture would be published in the paper and he'd be fired from his job on Wall Street. I'm sure there were many hearts pounding over the prospect of lost jobs, lost apartments, lost family and friends, and lost reputation. Standing in the dark of Stonewall almost 50 years later, I could just feel the fear of loss.

I tried to imagine what made that electric moment of fear flare into anger. Sure, it was a hot summer night. Sure, it was an era of all minorities rioting for long-deprived rights. Gay men could get shot in Vietnam for their country (if they lied about their orientation) and the same men could be billy-clubbed in Greenwich Village by the law of that same country. But what was it that, in that one moment, in that one place, made all these people decide that *that* time was one time too many? One person there said, "When did you ever see a fag fight back?" What changed that? What made them fight back?

Here's the answer I came to for myself, and from interviews with those who were at Stonewall, it was similar for them. The moment came when I had more to gain by coming out than I had to lose. I had more hope for life lived openly, than dread of loss. Coming out later in life from a conservative background meant that I was coming out in an environment not dissimilar to the one they came out in that June night of 1969. It meant losing friends, family, employment, and home for me. But I didn't want to lose one more moment of my life in the closet. It was time to stop fighting me. It was time to start fighting for me.

We all have our Stonewall moments. Many of us have had that one moment where we were tired of living in a closet, and it was time to face our fears and come out. Those moments come up whenever we're in new situations and disclose yet again. We have those moments where we have more to gain by coming out than we have to lose. That we have the freedom to be ourselves is thanks to those who faced their Stonewall moment, at Stonewall, in June of 1969.

I wasn't at Stonewall. Most of you weren't either. Maybe no one reading this was. But in our own way, we've all been there. We, too, have overcome. In that, we can all have pride.







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OUR AFFAIRS

- by Shane Lueck -

GSA: A Support System for GLBT Youth

What may not be common knowledge is that every high school in the Minneapolis and St. Paul public school districts has a GSA. And most of the middle schools do as well. The widespread nature of these GSA clubs reflect a trend that has gained traction in recent years in schools across the country as a support system for GLBT youth. GSAs have historically stood for Gay-Straight Alliance, but over the last few years the names have shifted to be more inclusive, with many clubs identifying as Gender and Sexuality Alliance instead.

When Jason Bucklin started his position as the LGBT program coordinator and Out4Good program coordinator with Minneapolis Public Schools four years ago, there were only seven GSAs in the district. Now there are 21, making it one of the most active clubs in the district. Eleven of those are at middle schools, giving Minneapolis one of the highest numbers of middle school GSAs in the nation.

With memberships ranging from six to 40 students in Minneapolis, Bucklin says GSAs can be arranged to fit the building's culture or students' needs. "We see GSAs that are about support, activism, or creating social opportunities and often times we see them as a combination of those elements," he says. "Whenever there is student interest, we encourage the creation of a GSA. Students should find an advisor and get started by building support among students and adults."

As advisors of the GSA at Capitol Hill Middle School within the St. Paul school district, Regina Wehner and Ann Hebble feel blessed to be supported, financially and emotionally, by the district's Out for Equity program, which strives to maintain a safe and welcoming school environment that fosters positive self esteem, respect for others, and academic success for all lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer students.

Wehner (who also works as Capitol Hill's school counselor), says starting a GSA today is significantly easier than in years past. After securing a school-sponsored leader (like a teacher or counselor), the group must focus on a specific goal, whether social, social activism, or a small, more therapy-oriented support group. In addition, GSAs must determine when and how frequently they will meet.

"We, at CapHill, are fortunate in that we have a daily recess/lunch 45 minutes," Wehner says. "Our GSA meets each Thursday during that time. Many schools are forced to meet after school and therefore must deal with transportation and snack issues."

Hebble, the group's co-advisor and an English language teacher, says there is no minimum number of participants to make a GSA a success. "When I first started Murray Middle School's GSA three years ago, only about six students met after school each week," she remembers. Now, the GSA has come into its own, having transitioned to a student-created name: G.L.O.W. (Gay, Lesbian, or Whatever). "At CapHill, we see an average of about 30 students per week! Keep in mind, though, that we meet *during* the day."

According to information from the Human Rights Campaign's website, 36 percent of LGBT youth participate often in Gay-Straight Alliance clubs at their schools. In an attempt to ensure the remaining 64 percent feel supported, these clubs dedicate a portion of their time to turning their schools into more welcoming environments.

And that support and need to create welcoming environments remains crucial, as during the 2014–15 school year, Wehner says the group faced some opposition. A couple of parents complained that the GSA was "recruiting gays and lesbians." That same year, some students complained that the group shouldn't be allowed to exist, citing religious reasons.

"Thankfully, in both of those cases, our administrators handled it and gave their full support to the group," Wehner says. "Our biggest challenge is that we don't have enough time with our students! There are so many projects they want to work on, and we just run out of time! What a problem, right?"

Those projects are the result of the students voting this year to be activists, creating projects that would help bring visibility to the group and make the school safe for all. Whether teaching lessons in elementary classrooms using a GLBTQ children's book, hosting lunches with school staff, or bringing in speakers from various organizations, the middle schoolers demonstrated a passion for civil rights.

"I will say that at our particular school, there is a lot of activist energy," Hebble says. "It's imperative to find resources, to connect with other GSAs and share. We in St. Paul Public Schools are fortunate to have our own Out for Equity department support us and be a clearinghouse for resources."

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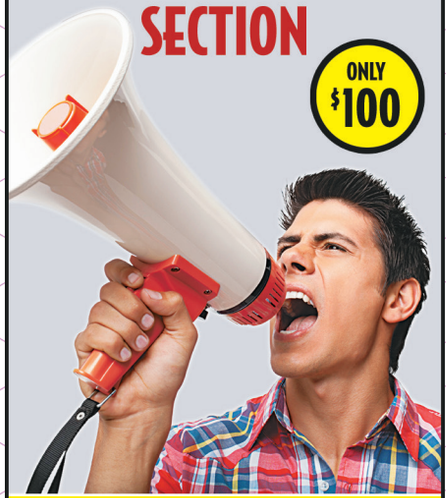


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OUR WEDDINGS

- by Shane Lueck -

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"It is easy to be inspired by beautiful things, I wanted to flex my creative muscle and find beauty in the darkness," says Gretchen Culver, owner of Rocket Science Weddings & Events. The inspiration for this styled shoot came from the Francis Bacon painting "1946," which lends itself perfectly to Culver's desire to find inspiration in art that isn't traditionally considered beautiful. In fact, many view his work as disturbing.

Culver's appreciation for art goes back to her roots as an art history major in college, a path which wasn't always planned. "A few good professors put me on that path; I have always had an interest in art and design so it was a natural fit," she says. "After college I didn't know what I was going to do, but happened into the world of special events. I loved how I was able to use my creativity and background in art to produce one-of-a-kind experiences for people. Now, each one of my events has an art historical context. Art is inspiration for me during the design process."



FRANCIS BACON, "1946"

Culver shares that there were some elements of this styled shoot that were very literal translations from the artwork. For example, the yellow boutonniere worn by one of the grooms, the oriental rug, the umbrella as a photo booth prop, and the shapes used for the painted panels. The colors were also directly pulled from the painting.

"While at first glance you might not notice the peach and mauve, the painting does have some beautiful interesting colors and tones," Culver adds. "I also tried to mimic the painterly feel of the work – this can be seen in the painted panels in the ceremony vignette as well as the invitation."

Some elements of the painting were less literal. The animal carcasses in the painting were the trickiest element to incorporate, Culver says, as she didn't want to push the envelope too far. This resulted in a roasted pig as part of the escort card display, draped beautifully with flowers. Pig hides were also included in various places (Bloody Mary bar, lounge, dessert table, photo booth backdrop) to allude to the animal carcasses.

"I looked more at the shapes and textures the animal parts were creating in the painting and then found design elements to represent that," Culver confesses. "Some elements were just fun inspiration. For example, I thought, what would be the signature drink at a Francis Bacon wedding and a Bloody Mary immediately came to mind. Our awesome dessert company, Cocoa & Fig, got creative with the desserts like a bacon cupcakes and blackberry macarons."

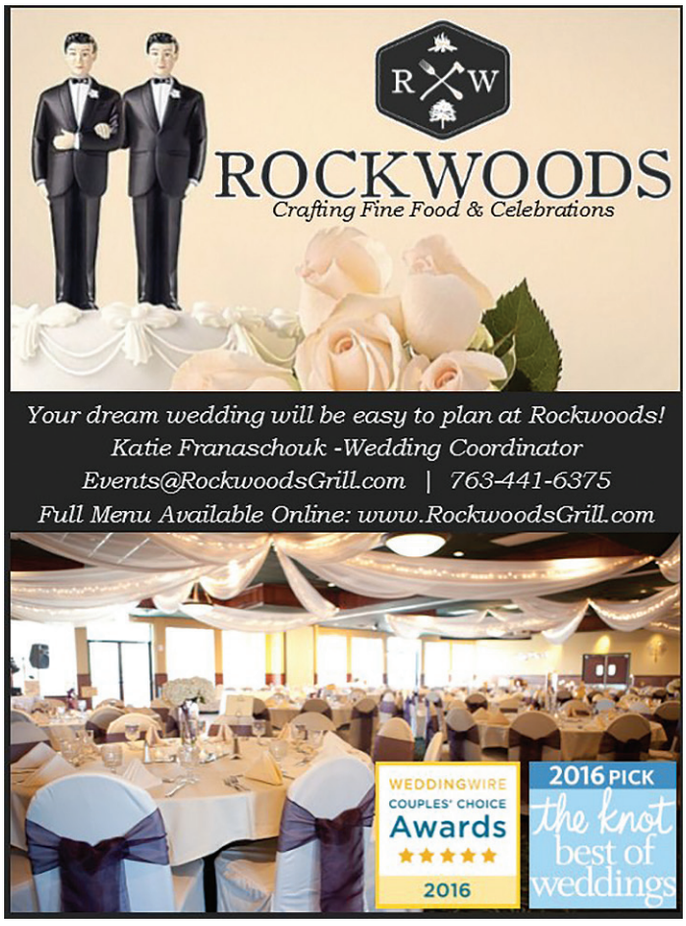
And what would a painting-inspired styled shoot be without real paintings? Local Minneapolis artist Steph Guidera shared her talents with "beautiful, moody paintings that were the perfect addition to the lounge vignette."

"The painting inspired me to create a same-sex styled shoot featuring two men. It just seemed like a natural fit for some reason," Culver adds, noting that the models are an actual couple who got married Labor Day weekend at Mill City Museum in 2015. "I knew they would be just perfect for the shoot as they are both handsome and 'tough' and so in love. You can really see it in the photos."

The addition of a flower girl in the shoot resulted from Culver's vision of the couple as a modern family. She says, "Many same-sex couples I know have children before they are legally married, because getting legally married just became an option! It is a family affair."



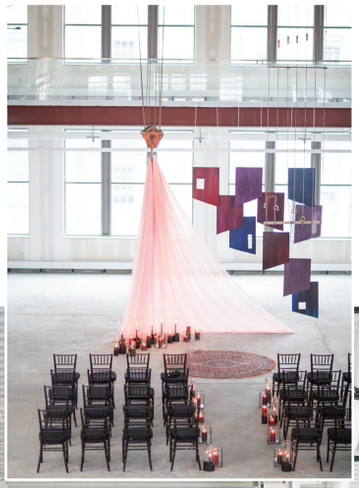
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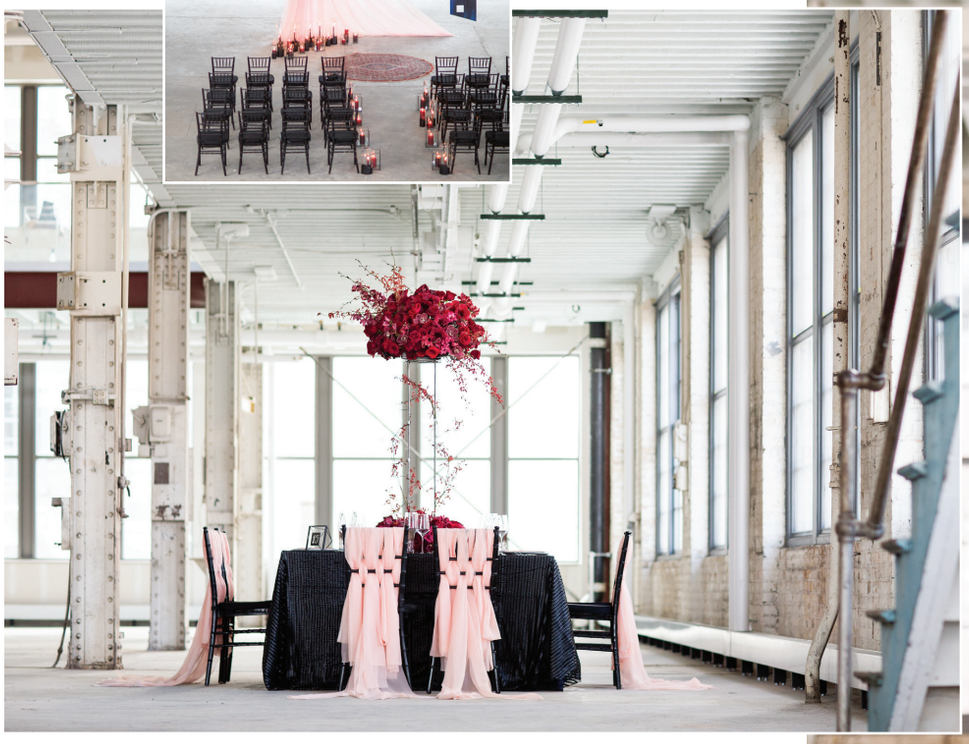

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The facility was used for a few different storage purposes over the years, but has mainly been empty in recent times. The benefit of this has been that the historical integrity of the space was largely kept intact. "When we saw the two levels of floor-to-ceiling windows and amazing location, we knew it would be a perfect asset to the event scene in Minneapolis," says Jessica Barrett, the Machine Shop's executive director. "This summer will be the inaugural wedding season for our venue, but we have a seasoned crew with years of planning extraordinary events under our belts. We truly love when individuals let their personalities, tastes, and personal traditions dictate the day."

Other than preferred vendors for catering and valet (not required with self-parking available in the neighborhood and surrounding street parking, but recommended), Barrett says couples are free to customize the space using vendors they enjoy. A combination of dimmable lighting throughout, some spotlighting and decorative accent lighting (all included with the rental cost) allow for a look perfect for the big day. And aside from open flames, confetti, or glitter, Barrett and her team are extremely flexible and want to help you create a unique expression of your event.

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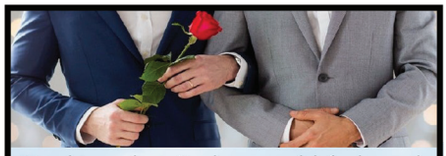
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ISAIA TUXEDOS FROM MARTIN PATRICK 3; ETON SHIRTS; RYAN SEACREST DISTINCTION BOW TIES AND POCKET SQUARES FROM MACY'S; MAGNANI SHOES; AND DAVID YURMAN RINGS.

ATTIRE

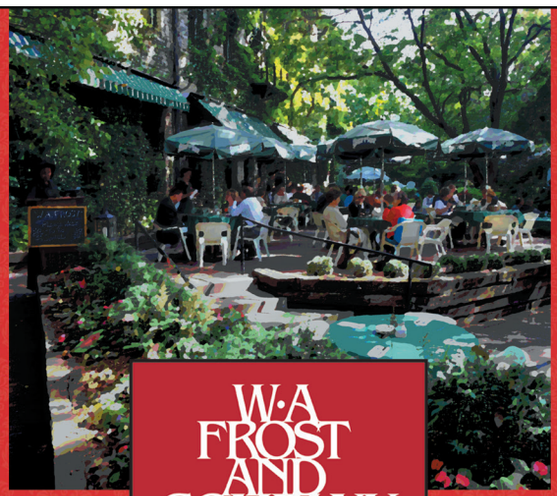
Although models Matt Gerber and Tim Mantel wore their tuxedos from their own 2015 wedding, Culver says this styled shoot was easy to dress because the painting expressly has a man in dark attire with a white shirt and yellow boutonniere.

"I always love tuxedos and bow ties," she shares. "I don't think there are enough reasons to get dressed up these days, so that is why I elevated the formality and look from the painting. The accessories they wore were complementary, not matching, and the colors were all pulled from the painting."

Complementary attire instead of matching, Culver says, is crucial. "Bring a bit more personality in to each outfit while still looking good together," she says. "Don't wait until the last minute. Tailoring takes time. For example, if you are ordering something custom from Italy remember that they don't work during the month of August so get your order in extra early if you are having a late summer or fall wedding."

Gerber's advice is bring extra, even if you think you won't need it. "Bring a spare undershirt, underwear, and socks," she says. "Whether it is summer or winter, you will get excited on your big day and sweat. You will be glad to have the option to change into fresh undergarments before the reception."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 156



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FLORALS

Rocket Science Weddings & Events is a planning and design firm, but will do florals for couples not utilizing those services if desired. Culver and her team created the floral arrangements for this shoot, selecting flowers because of their color and style. "I wanted to blend unique blooms like orchids and amaryllis with luxurious standards such as garden roses," Culver says. "We're starting to see a resurgence in the use of color. The soft color palette that dominated wedding florals the last several years is shifting to include more bold colors. This styled shoot is a great example of the trend."

As Culver notes, spring and summer weddings have the great advantage of using local, in-season flowers. Some flowers, like peonies, are only available in spring/early summer so if you have your heart set on a certain type of flower you should plan your wedding day around their growing season. And, Culver reminds couples to work within the color palette of your venue(s). She says, "If your flowers complement the space, the whole design is elevated and feels seamless, giving you a bigger bang for your buck. Talk with your florist about all of those details: your venue(s), attire, your style, etc. so they understand and can guide you in the right direction."

Culver's greatest advice is to be prepared for a bit of potential sticker shock; flowers are not cheap. Letting your florist know your budget up-front means they can help you make decisions that will give you the best look for your budget. "Without some budgetary guidelines, they may propose ideas that are not within your means, setting you up for disappointment," she says. "No reputable florist will try and gouge you or take advantage of you if you share your budget; rather it allows them to do their job better and give you the best end result."

Don't know what your budget is? Ask your florist for some ranges on what you should expect to spend or what they normally charge. P

Florals: Rocket Science Weddings & Events
Tableware: The Festive Frog, Ultimate Events
Linens: Aprés Party & Tent Rental
Drapery: Avant Décor, Nuage
Catering: Unique Dining Experiences
Desserts: Cocoa & Fig
Stationery: Gretchen Berry Design Co.
Additional Rentals: BeThings, Beverly & Co., Event Lab, On Solid Ground Vintage Rentals
Venue: The Machine Shop, www.machineshopmpls.com
Photography: Cadence & Eli Photography, www.cadenceandeli.com
Planning and styling: Gretchen Culver, Rocket Science Weddings & Events, www.rocketscienceweddingsandevents.com

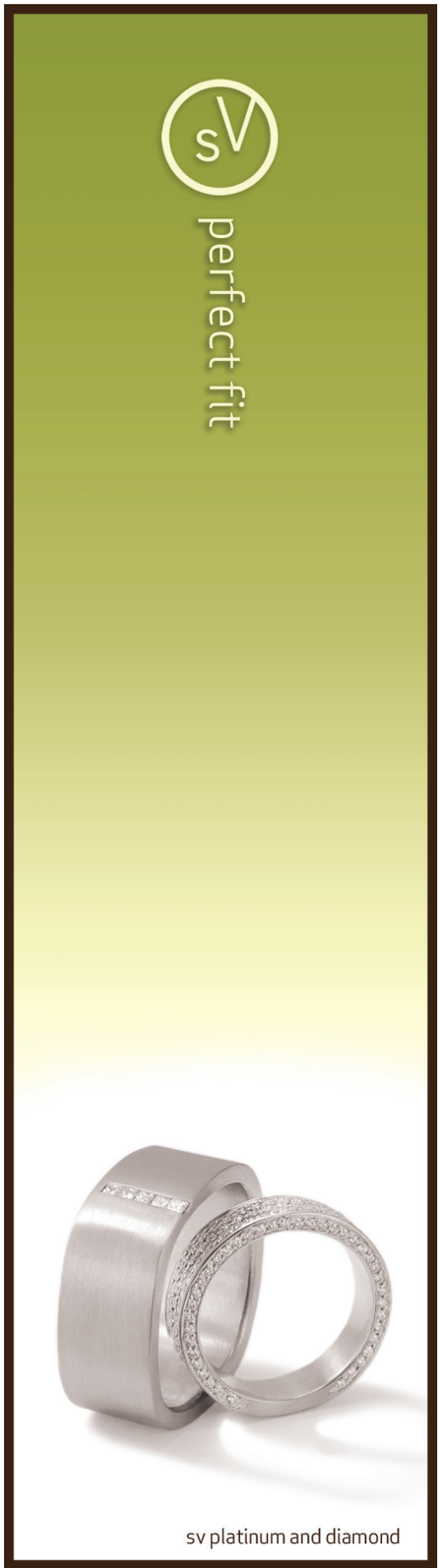

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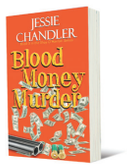


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- by E.B. Boatner -



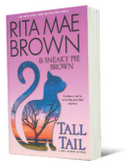
Blood Money Murder
Jessie Chandler
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Shay O'Hanlon, back in Chandler's fifth mystery novel, finds her world rocked when secrets from the past provide answers to questions perhaps better kept in the distant dark. Heady and heavy knowledge, Chandler keeps her caper capering with klutzy bad guys, Shay's newly discovered half-sister, Lisa, and the rest of the family, the usual cast and crew: her oldest friend Coop, genius savants Rocky and wife Tulip, her (their) father, Pete, owner of the newly refurbished Leprechaun Bar, and, of course, Eddy. Edwina Quartermaine, who raised Shay after her mother's violent death and who, for a lifetime, has harbored a secret struggling to the light. Eddy, now threatened by the bad guys, has awakened Shay's Tenacious Protector side, bringing kidnapping, mayhem, and sobering knowledge.



Class Distinctions: Dutch Painting in the Age of Rembrandt and Vermeer
Ronni Baer and Henk Van Nierop
MFA Publications
$65

The Dutch Golden Age, basically comprising the 17th century, was not only a high point in western art, but it happened at this point in Dutch history that artists like Rembrandt, Vermeer, Hals, Claesz, and Steen were freed from the usual constraints of royal and church patronage. This led to studies by these great artists of the whole spectrum of citizenry, nobility to tradesmen, workers, beggars, and their milieux. The astounding and meticulous details in these works informed the recent unique and splendid exhibit at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts (publisher of this volume). In addition to the 75 portraits, genre paintings, sea, and landscapes of the original exhibit, there are dozens more illustrations and detail, including five insightful essays on the period and the art.



Tall Tail
Rita Mae Brown & Sneaky Pie Brown
Bantam
$27

The Browns offer their 25th mystery featuring "Harry" Haristeen and her cohorts: cats Mrs. Murphy and Pewter, plus indefatigable corgi, Tee Tucker. Again, they successfully mine the colonial heritage of Crozet, Va., unearthing long-buried misdeeds that time has nurtured to visit upon a dying ex-governor, longtime friend of Harry's, and her dear friend Susan's maternal grandfather. Eighteenth-century characters we've met before include the Schuylers, the Wests, and Ewing Garth, who, although a slave owner like many men of his time, considers a different future. Another owner's mistreatment of his slave, Ailee, leads to his murder and to a biological trail that ends in a Crozet murder today. Humor, suspense, mystery, and family bonds drive this tale and will keep the reader riveted to the end.



Time is the Fire
Alfred Alcorn
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Two real-life poets, Stratis Haviaras and Seamus Heaney, are among compass points across which tosses the modest barque of Alcorn's Joycean, eponymous hero, Leopold Bloom O'Boyle. Traversing storm-tossed Harvard Square and its environs, L.B. contemplates the books he hasn't written, the novel one of his own characters is attempting to write, and the prospect of his beloved preacher's wife's almost-certain pregnancy. To write or not to write; abort or not abort. Time looms. Chronophobe O'Boyle chooses today, September 8,1992, of all days to wear his father Francis X's LeCoultre Master Mariner as he sails the literary seas in a time when poets shoaled like mermen on Harvardian waves. Witty, referential, particularly germane to anyone deciding whether to strive, seek, find, or just to yield. P

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OUR HOMES
- by Randy Stern -

PRIDE REFLECTIONS

When Pride rolls around every year, it is not just the celebration of who we are and what we do. It is about remembering Pride celebrations past.

In terms of automobiles, they have been a huge part of the celebration. Whether it is a sponsoring dealer with a small display at the festival grounds or one of various rides that either tow or carry the party down the parade route. Everything from city cars to medium-duty trucks have paraded alongside politicians, community leaders, scantily clad people of all stripes, celebrities, or wannabe celebrities.

We have seen it all, haven't we?

In my lifetime, I have to admit that the iconic image of the late Harvey Milk riding down Market Street in San Francisco on top of a Volvo 242 was my first marking of Pride and the automobile. Milk did not ride in a convertible, nor did he want to. He was a humble progressive who wanted to change the world, even from his office inside San Francisco City Hall.

It was a Volvo that Milk rode on, waving, shaking hands, welcoming those who have come out because of him (or wondering when they can come out).

That was in 1978. We have come a long way to be there. No one knew how far we would go to get where we stand today.

When I marched in my first Pride parade in 1993 at the San Francisco Freedom Day Parade, I saw a community still fighting for national attention, while fighting a few fires right within the 49 square miles that became the beacon for an entire culture and community. We proclaimed our "queerness" loud and proud, despite every other Pride parade showing our universality instead.

I came to the Bay Area from the San Fernando Valley in 1987 because I knew I could not be both a lover of the automobile and an out gay person at the same time. That iconic image of Milk sitting on top of that Volvo two-door was an invitation to become free away from the bonds of my family. The AIDS virus that wrecked the vibrancy of the Castro, SoMa, and Polk Street neighborhoods kept me away through a chunk of the 1980s.

As we waited our turn to march up Market Street from City Hall (we being a coalition of California State Universities and Colleges of which I became one of the alumni a couple of weeks prior), I noticed how mature our community became. Classic convertibles carried notable personali-



ties from our region: then-State Assembly Speaker Willie Brown, San Francisco school board president Tom Ammiano, and other people who had carried us through the pall of the virus and brightened up the beacon of light to those of us in the suburbs.

If we matured as a community, then why were we mad? I knew the answers, but I was some college grad from Marin County, what the heck should I care about what happened on the other side of the Golden Gate Bridge? All our contingent cared about was making the hundreds of thousands of people along Market Street in San Francisco know that "we're here, we're queer, and we paid too much tuition!"

That became true a week before. I stayed at a collaborator's place in Sebastopol, west of Santa Rosa. We decided to attend that city's Pride celebration as a "warm up" to the big one down in The City. At that time, I owned a 1991 Acura Integra RS coupe. It was bought brand new from the local dealer in Corte Madera. I figured it would be the right ride for me at the time, for a student finishing his undergraduate studies.

Like many people back in the early 1990s, I applied a Pride flag sticker on the back bumper of my Integra. This was a way to tell other motorists that we were indeed "here" and "queer," as we may be. If I did that a few years back, my prized Acura would have been a victim of vandalism somewhere in the Bay Area. Luckily, no one has ever touched my car. Perhaps it was a psychotic alarm that I got installed in it after I bought it.

I told my friend that I will go ahead into Santa Rosa and we'll meet up somewhere along the parade route. He agreed and I went on my merry way. As I was going eastbound on California Highway 12 from Sebatstopol, I was passed by a raised Jeep CJ-7. It had the same hue of blue as my little coupe, with tires that were as tall as the Integra. The roof was wide open and folded down out of the way. All I saw was a roll bar, a woman's figure, and a raised fist.

Then, I saw the Pride flag on the back of her speeding Jeep. I think we both knew where we were headed. I knew I lost her well before reaching US-101 and downtown Santa Rosa.

These days, moments like these no longer exist for me. Perhaps I have settled into a life where the automotive world has been an integral part of my gay life. The last five years were certainly illuminating, between meeting fellow enthusiasts, media comrades, employees of the OEMs, people inside the retail side of the business, and other suppliers and goods and services supporting the industry. Each has a story to tell, and there were plenty of stories we shared. These shared experiences are why we are indeed a community.

It is highly doubtful that I will have a repeat of those moments from the past. Not on the scale of that image of Milk riding on top of a Volvo at the biggest celebration of the GLBT community. Nor will I get a big powerful salute from a person in an open-top Jeep, showing solidarity of culture and society. Nor will I be able to march down the street, chanting angrily about paying too much tuition while embracing our collective queerness.

Maybe you will.

When you celebrate Pride, celebrate it the best way you can. Be proud of who you are. Be proud of the kind of vehicle you own, if you own a car, truck, van, or crossover/SUV.

Just be proud. P



OUR HOMES

- by Randy Stern / photos by Randy Stern -

2016 Audi TT



This car is a leap of faith.

Oh? What audacity did I have to make that statement? I mean, compared to *what*, really?

Let me explain: this car is the Audi TT. And, it had an image problem. Since its arrival in 1998, people saw the small round-ish coupe and roadster and did not think it was capable of being engaging and exciting. Some comments were quite…*homophobic*. A few die-hard enthusiasts have embraced the Mk1 TT brushing off its overall image.

Things improved when the Mk2 arrived in 2006. The TT looked sharper, more aggressive. Yet, it still had the task of trying to make up for years of the Mk1's image. This was bolstered by the arrival of the TTS: the first Audi Sport-infused version of its small coupe and roadster. The more powerful TT-RS simply exorcised the demons of its softer past.

Now, we have this sharp little number, the all-new 2016 TT. It is still a TT; small, concentrated and engaging. A week in this car begs the question whether it has shaken off the image of the TT from 18 years ago.

The quick answer is yes. But, there is still a full review to delve out here…

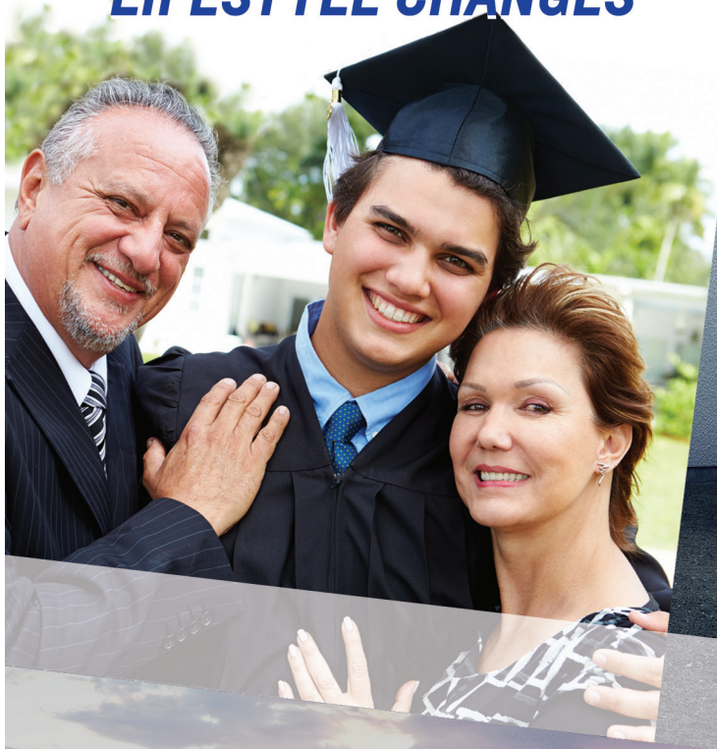
If there is an image problem, it is for the TT to be mistaken for the mightier mid-engined R8. This is a good problem to have, since the R8 embodies the ultimate in Audi design and engineering. The TT coupe is still a swoopy fastback that fills its diminutive size. While it employs Audi's latest round of sharp lines and edgier design cues, it still holds true to the unique shapes that TT always had for 18 years. There are a few twists, such as the rear window shape and the wider stance.

This Torch Red example offers some more great details for the new TT. LED lamps grace both front and back. The four rings are placed on the hood, rather than on the grille. Five-spoke 19-inch wheels finish up the performance-oriented look that truly makes the TT a more attractive package to drive in.

The TT also serves as a showcase of Audi's latest interior technology. The first thing that pops out at you from behind the wheel is the Virtual Cockpit — a full TFT screen that serves many functions for the driver. The main thing

CONTINUED ON PAGE 168

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this Virtual Cockpit does is integrate the functions normally found on a screen above the center stack in front of the driver. Therefore, you not only have your basic instrument gauges (speedometer, tachometer, gas and temperature gauges) in front of you, you also have trip information, fuel consumption, audio, phone, Audi connect, and navigation functions to work with, as well. The navigation system is powered by Google, which includes Google Earth for a three-dimensional view of where you are going. Most of these systems are controlled by the MMI knob on the center console, along with an array of controls on the steering wheel.

Audi connect adds an additional layer of connectivity and infotainment to the TT. Not only does it use Google Earth for the navigation system, it also adds Google Street View, Google Voice Search, route guidance using high level satellites, provides traffic, fuel pricing, and parking information. You can also tether a mobile device for Wi-Fi connectivity supplied by Google. An app is available to remotely connect to the TT, to lock and unlock the vehicle, among other functions.

If you want exceptional sound, Audi installed a Bang & Olufsen sound system on board. It emitted a fine sound throughout the cabin. You might consider the TT a turbocharged business-class laptop.

Though it is a 2+2 coupe, the rear seats are best for small children. Adults have two high-back front chairs offering deep bolstering and power-assisted support. These seats are on the firm side, however. Most sports cars do offer such sport seats for more enthusiastic driving. The hatch is small, but expandable with the rear seats folded down and the privacy panels removed. The actual rear compartment is shallow due to the short height of the vehicle and the position of the spare tire compared to the rear differential for the Quattro all-wheel drive system.

Power comes from a 220 horsepower 2.0-liter TFSI turbocharged four-cylinder engine. This engine is vaguely familiar, as it is part of a corporate family of performance four cylinders, especially one found under the hood of the Volkswagen GTI and Jetta GLI. This engine is channeled through a six-speed S tronic dual-clutch transmission and Audi's solid Quattro all-wheel drive system. Fuel consumption is pretty decent, scoring an average of 25.7 MPG.

There is no question about the TT's driving dynamics. It starts with a series of drive modes. Comfort lets you chill out with an absorbent ride, controlled handling and cornering, and a softer steering feel. Auto mode allows the car to choose its behavior depending on road conditions and traffic situations. Then, there is Dynamic mode. Switch it into that mode, and your ride becomes firmer, your cornering is flatter, your steering feels heavier and your exhaust note becomes louder. If you want to stake your claim onto one's road, set it to Dynamic. You can also have your own combination of settings by putting it into Individual mode.

No matter which mode you put it in, the steering system offers a solid turning radius and sharper response from the wheel. Braking is also solid with great pedal feel and strong stops in both normal and panic situations. Blind spot monitoring and a backup camera with cross-traffic alert make up the core of an active safety setup for the TT.

The base price for a TT coupe is $42,600. Our tester came with several packages, ringing up the total price to $50,600. The Roadster model is available with a starting price of $46,400. There is a more powerful model available: the TTS by Audi Sport. For this 292 horsepower super TT, you would need to fork over at least $51,900.

It is worth concluding how much the TT has changed its image to a more muscular small sports coupe. Customers have responded and it is a rare sight to see a TT at any given showroom. For those who want one, come in with the notion of owning something rewarding to drive. The TT is a rewarding coupe that will now turn heads and quiet the detractors.

It takes a leap of faith to dive into something like an Audi TT. This is a sporty little number that can excite you into doing things that might not be legal; however, it is the kind of sports coupe that could also be responsible… *maybe*.

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- by Kathleen Bradbury -



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With summer right around the corner, most Minnesotans are in full lawn-maintenance mode. The hiss of sprinkler systems is starting to join the chorus of morning birds, and the roar of lawn mowers disrupts the tranquility of fresh spring afternoons. Many people are spending hours out in their yards, not yet enjoying the spaces, but preparing them to be beautiful in the coming months.

While yard work might be an enjoyable pastime for many people (myself included), it's not as enjoyable to take a closer look into the resources required to maintain a green and glorious yard. The yard may look lush and green, but your wallet, your free time, and the environment are paying the price. This high cost of maintaining an ideal lawn is leading many people to consider a "greener" option: sustainable landscaping.

Sustainability can mean many different things for different people. Jeff Zaayer, a landscape designer at Southview Design, says, "Generally, people

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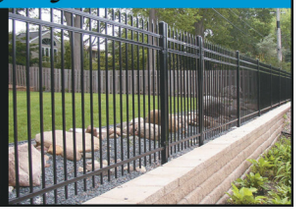
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think sustainable is something that's going to last and thrive as much as it can with minimal inputs." Typical inputs for landscaping would include water, fertilizer, maintenance, and people's time. By using plants and materials requiring minimal inputs, sustainably designed yards also have a positive environmental impact.

There are many environmental benefits to sustainable landscaping choices, but the most considerable resource preserved is water. Zaayer notes that most people don't realize how much water actually goes in to making yards look green. "For a typical Minneapolis city lawn, an in-ground irrigation system is going to kick out anywhere between 1,000 and 2,000 gallons of water every time it cycles." Additionally, many people run their systems even when additional watering isn't needed, which greatly increases the amount of water used.

Sustainable options seek to avoid this water consumption, lessening the impact on both the wallet and the environment. By capturing and using rainwater through the use of rain barrels, homeowners can water the

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areas that need extra moisture. Also, the use of rain barrels and rain gardens reduces the burden on the city storm sewers, which can quickly get flooded during a heavy storm. In addition to saving water, sustainable planting choices can also limit the amount of gasoline used for frequent mowings and reduce the amount of organic waste created.

Zaayer recently joined me at my new home in the Victory neighborhood of Minneapolis to talk about the sustainable landscaping choices he helped the previous owner bring to fruition. While this project was completed several years ago, the lawn incorporates several sustainable practices that are now becoming more popular in the Twin Cities area, such as planting alternative grasses like fescue, and using rain barrels and rain gardens to consume water in a more conscious way.

The yard has a unique and natural aesthetic that my wife and I deeply appreciate, but we were a bit wary of the alternative maintenance required. Contrary to our assumptions, our new sustainable yard does not require a significant amount of expert maintenance, a trait that appeals to many homeowners looking for sustainable options.

Aside from all the environmental benefits of sustainable landscaping, Zaayer notes that the lower amount of maintenance is a strong selling point for homeowners. One increasingly popular way to achieve a green yard without much input is to use no-mow fescue grasses. Fescue is a clump grass that does not require special watering or more than an annual mowing in the fall, making it a great choice for sustainable yards.

Unlike traditional bluegrass, fescue has a much more natural aesthetic. Zaayer explains how fescue's seeding cycle creates several different visual looks throughout the season: "When it goes to seed, it stands up. But once it's done seeding, it flops over and lies down on its own weight." When the fescue is lying down, it looks lush and wavy, and it covers up any bare spots between each

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individual clump.

Although fescue is still more of a "niche" planting choice, more people are choosing to enjoy this low-maintenance grass, though a different type of upkeep is required: occasional weeding. Though weeding may sound like tedious work, Zaayer notes that many people find it enjoyable. He describes the appeal one client saw of weeding: "He wanted to sit outside with his wife and have a conversation as they tended the lawn instead of putting on headphones and running an 80-decibel lawn mower." The act of weeding can also be therapeutic or meditative, offering a quiet task that connects people more closely with their yards.

Fescue is a wise choice for people who have busy lives, especially if they frequently travel. For one of Zaayer's clients, a key factor in choosing a fescue lawn was his lifestyle: "He travels a lot, he works a lot. He'd be gone for weeks at a time, so having a traditional lawn that you mow on a weekly basis wasn't right." Zaayer adds that many sustainable landscaping options, such as fescue, can thrive on a hands-off approach, making them ideal solutions for busy lifestyles.

The cost of no-mow fescue seed can be slightly higher than the traditional bluegrass seed mix used on many Minnesota lawns, creating a higher upfront cost. In the long run, however, fescue is proving to be an option that is worth the initial investment. Water bills for these yards are significantly lower, and frequent costs such as gasoline for the mower are few. And most of all, a homeowner does not spend their precious time laboriously pushing a lawn mower around every square foot of the yard, week after week, year after year.

In addition to choosing sustainable grasses, homeowners are more frequently incorporating rain gardens into landscape designs in order to minimize the impact on the city's sewer system. Rain gardens contain loose soil and plants that enjoy water, such as Dwarf Bush Honeysuckle. They are great for capturing any excess water from downspouts, and they can also come in handy during extremely heavy rains by absorbing any additional



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water that backs up from the storm sewer. Zaayer also notes some additional benefits: "When water filters through rain gardens, its temperature cools and some of its energy is removed," making its impact on the sewer system significantly lighter.

In addition to more macro-level choices such as grass seeding and water systems, there are many fun sustainable choices that are purely decorative. For example, taller ornamental grasses like switch grass can be planted along property lines to create a low-maintenance pseudo-hedge for privacy. Or, people can create outdoor living spaces using AZEK permeable pavers, a LEED-certified alternative to brick or stone pavers. Made of 95% recycled materials (like old tires), these slip-resistant pavers look like traditional stone, reduce water run off, and have an extremely long lifetime.

Unlike our yard, which was designed to be completely sustainable, there are ways to incorporate thoughtful practices without committing to a total landscape overhaul. In fact, many of Southview Design's clients choose to add options like rain gardens into their current designs. Many people choose to make these small, conscious changes because they help the environment without requiring drastic changes to the yard's aesthetic.

If people are interested in sustainable landscaping, Zaayer suggests testing the changes out on a portion of the yard. An easy way to do this is to turn unused areas into sections that are more passively managed, such as a

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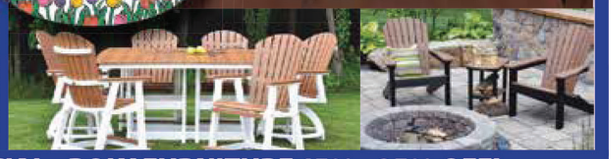
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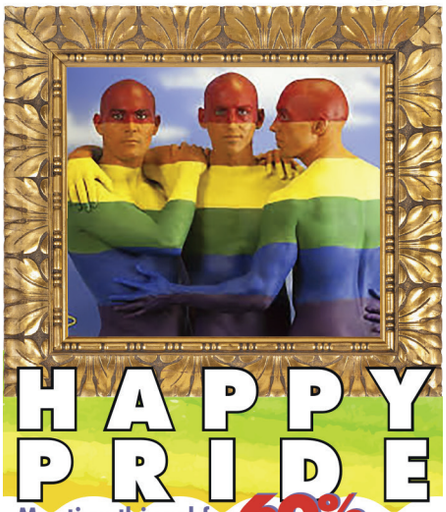
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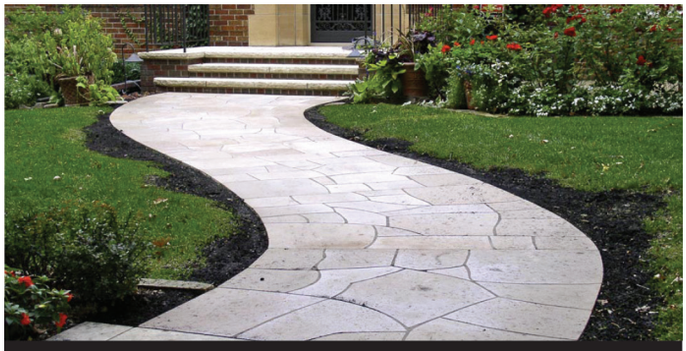
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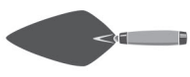
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no-mow fescue area or a wildflower planting. "That's a really great way to test the waters and see if you like the aesthetic," he adds. "People may like the aesthetic but not want it everywhere." Even these small, thoughtfully designed sections can reduce the amount of resources and time required for maintenance.

When choosing an area to redesign, Zaayer suggests that people consider areas that are not directly situated around the house: "The community standard is usually a house with plantings around foundation, which is great when you're walking down the street or driving by. It makes the house look really nice… but when you're inside the house, what do you look at?" Creating areas a distance away from the house will allow you to enjoy the view from your own window.

No matter what stage of the design process clients may be in, Southview Design can help people redesign their spaces to incorporate sustainable choices. Some of Southview Design's clients come to them with specific goals, such as reusing water from the roof or minimizing spaces that require mowing. Zaayer also says many people start the process simply with photos that inspire them or have elements they like. Throughout the design and planting process, Southview Design helps homeowners make smart choices that have lasting impact.

Most people who choose to make sustainable improvements to their landscapes are attracted to the natural aesthetic, but for others, it isn't as easy of a switch. Zaayer explains, "In some instances, people do have to compromise their aesthetic mind. But when you explain to them what they're going to get out of a sustainable yard, it becomes pretty apparent pretty quickly that this is a good option."

Because the look of a sustainable yard can conflict with traditional expectations, people may initially think that the yard doesn't adhere to community yard standards. In order to avoid some of the misunderstandings and educate the public about sustainable yards, many homeowners put up signs that label the yard as a sustainably designed space and list websites that provide more information. Admittedly, the aesthetic is different from what people have come to expect from their lush, perfectly trimmed yards. But many people are finding that challenging these expectations by using more sustainable choices is worth it, both for the homeowner and the environment. P

To learn more about sustainable garden options, visit www.southviewdesign.com.



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SKIRTING THE ISSUES

- by Ellen Krug -

Whoops and Cheers for Hope and Compassion

Last month, I had the pleasure to again visit Rochester, Minn. to conduct diversity training and speak on living as a transgender human.

As things turned out, I did a total of three events (!) between 9 a.m. and 8:30 p.m. This schedule began to gel two months ago when the City of Rochester asked me back to do a Wednesday afternoon Gray Area Thinking™ presentation. After I posted that event on my website calendar, I received an email from the Olmsted County Sheriff's Department asking if I could train their juvenile detention facility team members on Gray Area Thinking™ and Transgender 101 on Wednesday morning. Not long after that, I heard from the Rochester Public Library, where I had spoken in early 2014. They wanted me to speak on Wednesday evening with a presentation of part Trans 101 and part my personal story.

I thus headed into Wednesday, May 18 with a sense of trepidation, wondering how I'd hold up through nearly seven hours of speaking…and fretting over how my feet would hold up after being in heels for that long.

I shouldn't have been at all concerned: the audience at each venue was very welcoming and it appeared that my messages and themes hit their marks. It was great to meet new people at the Sheriff's Department and to again see folks from the City.

What touched me most, however, was the library audience. At the end of my introduction to an audience of 117 persons, I heard both applause and, quite unbelievable for me, actual *whoops*.

"Holy cow," I thought to myself. "They're treating me like some kind of rock star."

I wondered whether I had inadvertently walked into the wrong room.

I began by speaking of how transgender and non-transgender (the technical phrase is "cisgender") persons are each survivors of the human condition. It's just that for trans people, our survivorship is much more public.

Similarly, I talked of how every human, trans or not, shares the "Four Commonalities": everyone wants their children to succeed; all want to be free of physical or emotional violence; we each seek a measure of peace; and everyone wants to love and be loved. I offered that if only we, as a people, could remember these commonalities, we'd collectively be able to overcome any obstacle and resolve any difference.

After giving some Trans 101 basics (explaining gender identity, gender expression, etc.) and sharing about my story, I spoke of how I'm inspired by the "Special Ks" (Dr. King and Robert Kennedy, whom I've written about before on my blog at www.elliekrug.com) and how they taught that we have an obligation to make the world a better place. I then reminded about the need to have compassion for others and for ourselves. "Understanding that one's gender identity isn't a choice," I said, "is a form of compassion."

I talked about the various "bathroom bills" that have been introduced in the legislatures of at least 16 states and passed in North Carolina and Mississippi. "It's all about fear," I offered. "People are far more easily motivated by fear than by compassion."

Most importantly, I shared about the power of the human spirit, that we have the ability to literally overcome anything, even our brain not matching our body. "I believe in the human spirit," I said. "I believe in all of you, even though I don't know you. Have compassion for others and for yourself."

At the end of my talk at the library, I again heard applause, cheers and whoops, followed by a standing ovation. It was incredibly humbling.

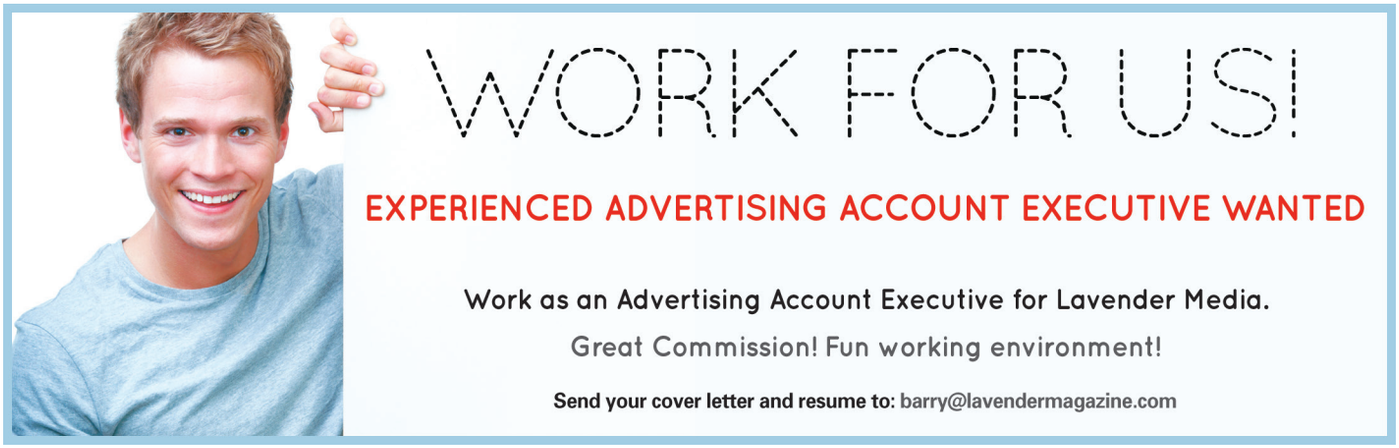
I share this not out of ego, but instead to demonstrate that I believe people are tired, worn out and just plain fatigued, of being *afraid*. Fear seems to be the only messaging today. Instead, I think the audience at the Rochester Public Library showed that more than anything else, people really want one thing: *hope*.

A message about the power of the human spirit does just that: it tells others not to despair or become lost. Rather, there's great hope for all of us. After all, if a trans person can survive and thrive (as many do), then anyone can survive and thrive!

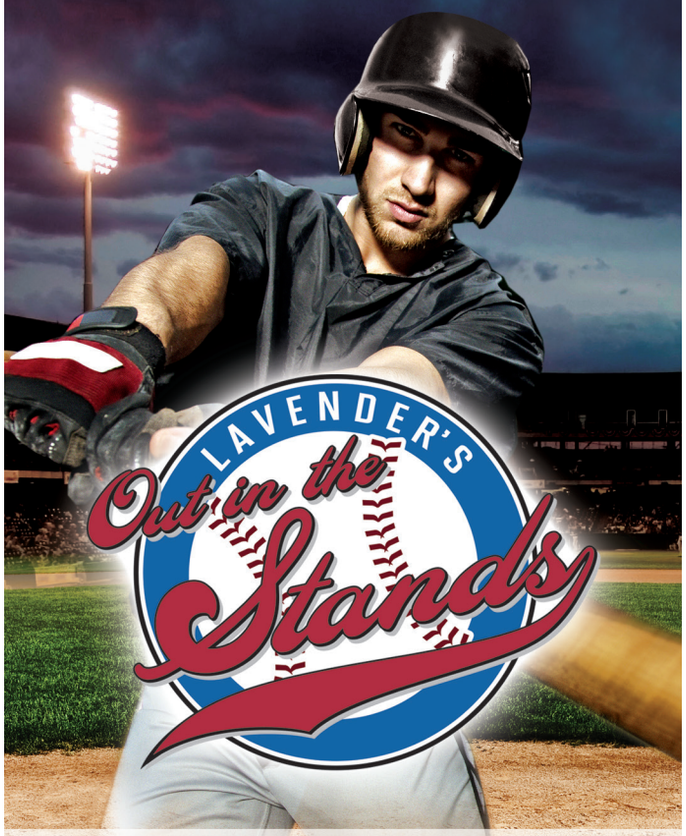
I am so grateful (and again, humbled) to firsthand witness how a message of hope has the ability to touch others. Wow! Double wow! Being able to deliver that message is a privilege of immense proportion.

Thank you, Rochester. You rock! (And by the way, my feet held up just fine…)

Ellen (Ellie) Krug is the author of Getting to Ellen: A Memoir about Love, Honesty and Gender Change *(2013) and the framer of "An Open Letter to the Twin Cities", which includes a 10 point plan for changing the Twin Cities diversity/inclusion landscape (www.elliekrug.com/my-blog). She welcomes your comments at ellenkrugwriter@gmail.com.*



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DATELAND
- by Jennifer Parello -

Pack Your Bags

Every day, for the past month, I've asked my girlfriend the same question. I try to ask it in as casual and lilting a manner as possible so as not to make her feel threatened or pressured. But as the days progressed, and I still did not receive an answer that will allow me to stop asking this question, my voice has taken on a certain edge that some might define as hysteric. Every day, for the past month, I've asked my girlfriend the same question. I try to ask it in as casual and lilting a manner as possible so as not to make her feel threatened or pressured. But as the days progressed, and I still did not receive an answer that will allow me to stop asking this question, my voice has taken on a certain edge that some might define as hysteric.

The question is: "Have you started packing yet?"

Early on, I tried to wrap it in something flattering. "Gee, you're pretty. Oh, and by the way, have you started packing yet?"

Then I tried asking it in various foreign accents. Not German, of course, because I didn't want to scare her. But the accents of love: Italian, French, and something that could be characterized as a messy mix of all the accents from the movie *Casablanca*. "My darling, have you started packing yet?"

I also tried to make a game out of it. "Hey! Have you started packing yet? If not, let's get started tonight. I'll race ya!"

But each day, my question, no matter what pretty dress it was cloaked in, was greeted with the same cool stare and a single word: "No."

Finally, today, I fell to my knees and pleaded. "We close on the house in two weeks. Start packing!"

My girlfriend and I have different philosophies on the subject of getting things done. She's a thinker and I'm a doer. This generally works to both of our advantage. She knows not to mention an idea to me until it's fully baked because I will act on it immediately.

For example, she quietly considered architectural changes to our summer cottage for months before raising the subject. Then, when she was ready for me to act impulsively on her idea, she made casual mention that she'd like to knock down the wall between the kitchen and living room. I arranged to have it down by the following weekend.

It was her idea to buy a new home. So she wisely scouted the properties on the market and didn't mention it to me until she had thoroughly vetted the notion internally. A week after she put me on the case, we made an offer on a house.

This system works perfectly as long as she's able to focus on strategy and I'm occupied with carrying it out. It gets tricky when either of us is forced to perform the other's duties.

And that's why we're at a packing standoff. There are certain tasks (those that require some amount of critical thought) that she will not allow me to perform. Packing is one of them. Sure, I'd get the entire house packed in a day, but kitchen stuff would mingle with pet supplies and clothing would be dumped in boxes with garden tools. In her mind, this would be akin to creating a situation similar to what's going on in the Middle East: complete chaos and tension among our inanimate objects that would take generations to resolve.

Today, I grabbed her hand and led her to the pile of empty boxes. Normally, I would be thrilled at the sight: empty boxes waiting to be filled! A challenge to be conquered! But now, denied the ability to begin filling them, the vacant mountain of cardboard simply depressed me. And to her, the boxes were as foreboding as Everest. So she pivoted us back to our comfort zone.

"How about if I tell you what to put in each box, and you do the labor?" she said. And, suddenly, the Earth returned to its axis.

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AT LARGE

- by John Mark -



PHOTO COURTESY OF BIGSTOCK

From Conflict to Celebration

I remember my first Twin Cities Pride like it was yesterday. The prepossessing chaos of Hennepin Avenue, the energy in Loring Park, and the incredible concentration of GLBT individuals for one weekend in our Twin Cities. As a teenager, the first time was overwhelming, to say the least. Having not entirely come out to my family, I was fascinated, liberated, but still so very insecure. Like any teenager, I had a lot of insecurities about my body. I remember wearing baggy pants and a long-sleeve tee to Pride, embarrassed about the gangly and stick-like nature of my long limbs. An aesthetic I would later embrace as totally fashionable, for early 2000s John Mark, my first Pride experience was one that held dichotomized emotions of excitement and self-loathing.

While today I enjoy Pride as an exciting celebration of community, my teenage self could not help but spend the day comparing my underdeveloped body to those around me. It was the friendliness of the community that drew me out of my shell. I remember being so surprised by the incredible love and acceptance in the air. While there is nothing secretive about our Pride festival, as a young man, my attendance felt mischievous. An adventure full of secret glances, jaw drops, and giggles.

It took time to fully embody who I was as an individual and a gay man in society. Pride was a great stepping stone for me. Well over a decade later, I have much more confidence and, in addition to Twin Cities Pride, I have attended Pride celebrations in New York City and Shanghai. Twin Cities Pride is still my favorite.

Much like the city of New York itself, the Big Apple's Pride is fun, but aggressive, intimidating, and for me, all too intense. West Village streets are packed and the people party hard. Shanghai's Pride is depressingly small. Local businesses in Shanghai are reluctant to participate and much of the festival is confined to a few small blocks. Only publicized in English and only seven years old, Shanghai's Pride is still a baby, fighting for its sheer existence. There is no blessing of a Pride festival we have in the Land of 10,000 Lakes.

We draw a huge crowd from neighboring states. Our parade is diverse and a great representation of both our allies and GLBT community at-large. Our Minnesotan sensibilities create an atmosphere that is friendly, welcoming, and warm. Our local businesses are active participants in our Pride. Our local creatives present wonderful entertainment on stages both conventional and informal throughout the city. Our community embraces people of all walks of life. Our Pride is one that makes me proud to be a Minnesotan.

I was not present for the first Twin Cities Pride in 1972, but I can imagine that it has come a long way. This Pride, let's keep our tradition of love and acceptance going strong. If you are like me, where years have passed with Pride as a simple routine, it can be easy to forget how momentous of an occasion in can be for those who are new to the community. Let's keep an eye out for the insecure ones, the ones with slouched posture and a shyness that speaks volumes. A simple smile and a wave can do a lot. Twin Cities Pride is the best for a reason, and that reason is Twin Cities heart.